MEMO for UBC Executive Board

Cooperation between UBC and CDP

Risto Veivo, UBC SCC Co-chair, 1 June 2016

**Key points:**

* UBC is the leading organization of cities in Baltic Sea region and CDP is the world’s leading organization on voluntary Climate reporting.
* The Baltic Sea and Nordic regions are well-known for advanced Climate policies and ambitious cities that can provide useful experiences and tested examples for other parts of the world.
* UBC and CDP are proposed to join their competences and create a state-of-the-art Climate Leadership report to be launched at the 14th General Conference of the UBC (Växjö, Sweden 2017).
* UBC-CDP cooperation would be formalized and guided by a Memorandum of Understanding.

**Suggested course of action:**

* UBC Executive Board could take note of the preparations and delegate the Presidium to take decisions on the Memorandum of Understanding and the President to sign it, as/when appropriate.
* UBC Sustainable Cities Commission and its Secretariat are ready to provide content input, assistance and facilitation for the preparation process to support the President.

**Profiles of CDP and UBC**

CDP – previously called the Carbon Disclosure Project – provides the world’s only global natural capital disclosure system. Currently over 5500 companies – representing 81% of the global 500 and over 50% of the market capitalization of the world’s largest 30 stock exchanges – 60 states and regions, and this year over 500 cities from 84 countries have used the system to report, share and take action. CDP actively analyzes the data provided by the companies, governments and cities to create knowledge and provide reports on the findings. The insights this brings enables investors, companies, cities and governments to understand and act on the business case for reducing impacts on the environment and natural resources. Over 800 institutional investors representing over a third of the worlds invested capital rely on the CDP system. CDP is a global not-for-profit organization, founded in 2000 and headquartered in London.

UBC, Union of the Baltic Cities, is the leading network of cities in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). UBC mobilizes the shared potential of its member cities for democratic, economic, social, cultural and environmentally sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region. UBC works for the attainment of its vision of the Baltic Sea Region as a dynamic, innovative and attractive global growth center, where success is based on smart, green, resource-efficient and sustainable economic and social development. UBC wants to see the Baltic cities becoming increasingly recognized as global forerunners in Climate-smart development creating a high quality living environment for their inhabitants. UBC was founded in 1991 in Gdansk, Poland and it has around a hundred member cities from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden.

*The profiles of CDP and UBC are different yet their main aims are highly complementary. Based on the different profiles and complementary aims, a beneficial cooperation can be initiated, which will utilize the specific strengths of each organization to create outcomes that neither of them could easily achieve on its own.*

**Idea for Cooperation**

Improved knowledge and understanding are basis for efficient action. UBC Strategic Framework puts a strong emphasis to cooperation with other organizations. Working with partners whose competences complement our own provides good synergy.

Following the UBC Sustainability Action Programme 2016 – 2021, as adopted at the 13th General Conference, Leadership for Climate-smart Baltic Cities is a key focus for UBC’s work. As Climate-smart leaders are seen cities that take climate change aspects into consideration in their entire decision making, e.g., in urban planning, mobility planning, energy related actions (efficiency, production) and buildings etc. Many UBC cities indeed efficiently seek to take the leadership in becoming climate-smart, decreasing their greenhouse gas emissions and using renewable energy sources efficiently.

CDP strives constantly to build new knowledge and is interested in the Climate Leadership examples of BSR cities. The reporting system of CDP will also benefit from having more BSR cities using it.

The proposed co-operation would – utilizing UBC’s network and CDP’s reporting system, database and knowledge – produce a state-of-the-art report on strategic Climate work and Leadership in Baltic Sea region cities. This would be prepared for by involving more BSR cities to report for CDP and then by utilizing the analytical tools of CDP registry for studying the strategic leadership and key actions of these cities. This analysis would then be accompanied with a limited number of case studies/examples from BSR cities. For instance the host city of the 14th General Conference, Växjö, is widely recognized for its long-term Climate Leadership and could very well be one of the cities highlighted as such an example. Overall, the city cases should include cities of different size and profile from different BSR countries.

The report “Climate Leadership from Baltic Sea Region Cities” would be completed for the UBC General Conference 2017 and would provide a highly interesting and globally relevant input for the conference. In connection to this, CDP could also be invited to contribute to the program of the conference for instance in form of keynote presentation(s) and or involving speakers or other forms of contribution from its network, as appropriate, and wished for by the Leadership of both parties.

**Status of Preparation**

Discussions on the cooperation between UBC and CDP on the operational level were started at a working meeting between UBC SCC Co-chair Risto Veivo and CDP Cities Manager for Europe, Middle East and Africa, Juliette Daniels 3 December 2015 at the Paris Climate Conference. Following this, UBC Sustainable Cities Commission was happy to have Juliette Daniels as a guest speaker at its Advisory Board meeting in Gdansk, 16-17 March 2016. During this visit and following it, the above presented idea to cooperate in good synergy between the UBC and CDP was developed. Internal consultations on the idea are now ongoing on both sides.

**Advisable Next Steps**

In practice, the co-operation between CDP and UBC could (and should) be formalized by a Memorandum of Understanding. This can be prepared to be signed in September 2016. In parallel, preparation for a joint plan for the study/report are to be continued. Both preparations may require working meetings between the parties. Furthermore, a suitable occasion for the signing of the MoU and communications on this should also be prepared. (See above, “Suggested course of action”.)