



BALTIC LOCAL AGENDA 21 CONFERENCE

The European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign will hold four regional conferences in 1998 and 1999. One of these will be arranged in Turku, Finland, on 3 - 5 September 1998. The conference will focus on the implementation of Baltic 21 at local level, fulfil the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign and bring into focus the health aspect in local sustainable development. The target group for the conference are administrators and politicians from the cities, ministries and other authorities as well as NGO's and other interested organisations. Thanks to financial support from the EU and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment it will be easier for representatives from eastern cities to take part in the conference. On the last day of the conference a study tour to the Åland Islands will be arranged.

Call for Papers

Since the conference will focus on local level work and issues relevant from the cities point of view, the Commission on Environment is encouraging the UBC's member cities to suggest case studies to be presented at the conference. Please send your suggestions to the Commission on Environment Secretariat in Turku before 15 April. You are also welcome to contact the Secretariat and discuss possible ideas and topics for the conference.

The UBC will organise the conference in cooperation with the City of Turku, Association of Finnish Local Authorities, European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign, The Finnish Ministry of the Environment, ICLEI and WHO.

Further information:

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GDAŃSK AND LOCAL AGENDA

Gdańsk, in comparison with many other regions of Poland, has today relatively good environmental conditions. Some reduction in the number of tourists visiting the city has been caused by a false but prevalent opinion about Gdańsk as an area of ecological danger. In the 70's the bay was dirty and beaches were closed. A lot has been done later on, and today the city's environmental policy is quite advanced.

The Heritage of Past Decades

Political and economical changes in the early 80s entailed a mentality change in the Polish society. The economy entered a new phase, which after 40 years of another rule wasn't easy to start. Also the attitudes about environmental protection had to change. During the previous 40 years not much attention was paid to the dangers to the environment. The most important thing was production. There were neither money for ecologically friendly investments nor for environmental protection.

The Early 90's - Getting Started

Since 1991 the Environmental Protection and Agriculture Department in Gdańsk's City Hall has been publishing an annual report on the state of environment in the region. Analysis of data included in these reports give an idea on the city's development and activities taken by enterprises in order to act in an ecologically friendly way. According to the data collected by the department, the state of environment in the region improves every year.

In 1992 work on ecological policy really begun. The action wasn't called Local Agenda 21 as we didn't know it yet. We were discussing ecological priorities and proposal of working out the ecological policy with City Council, different social groups, Commission of Environmental Protection, agriculture associations, trade unions, professional groups, enterprises, scientists and ecologists. Based on the results of these discussions ecological policy for the region has been worked out.

Plans and Resolutions - Towards Agenda 21



The environmental policy of Gdańsk is being led in accordance with short-, medium- and long-term plans as well as in accordance with the Resolution of the City Council on Environmental policy dated 20th July 1993. Following the resolution we have issued Local Agenda 21 brochure in 1995. This part of the information process accomplished the first step in our LA 21 process. At the end of 1996 we have issued Environmental Quality Assessment - Changes in 1991 - 1996". This report is also a part of carrying out the Local Agenda 21.

Dialogue with Citizens

In September 1996 the second step begun: verification of the policy with the needs of the citizens. We started the dialogue with citizens living on Sobieszewska Island. At the moment being we are organising meetings in several districts of the City. Thanks to these meetings we will be better informed about problems which people living in the districts expect to be solved.

The dialogue is a very important part of the LA 21 process. We will do our best in order to meet our citizens' needs. We find the meetings the best way of getting in touch with as many citizens as possible. Having their opinion we will do the analysis of needs and effects, after which the third edition of Local Agenda 21 will be prepared and published.

Further information:

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