

# Implementing the first initiatives of the Climate Network of City Leaders



*Meeting of the Climate Network of City Leaders, 3 May 2012, in Tampere*  
*Pauli Välimäki*

- The six largest Finnish cities have actively implemented climate initiatives.
- Implementation has enhanced cooperation between the cities.
- Various joint climate projects have been started, with a range of partnerships.





## 1<sup>st</sup> initiative: A roadmap for energy-smart construction

- Excellent progress in all cities.
- Helsinki and Espoo cooperate on the matter, as do Tampere and Vantaa, which are involved in the *Ownership in Sustainable Construction* research and development project administered by VTT, the Technical Research Centre of Finland.
- In Oulu, a working group is preparing the roadmap.



## 2<sup>nd</sup> initiative: Developing building control



- The objective is the same in all cities, but the measures differ.
- In the Helsinki Metropolitan area, energy training has been organized in building control.
- Tampere has founded the Energy Consultancy Centre for Construction and Housing.
- In Helsinki, online advising has been increased and a discount granted on the construction permit fee to especially energy-efficient houses.
- In Oulu, 94% of small houses are low-energy houses due to activation of constructors.



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## 3<sup>rd</sup> initiative:

# A climate-conscious citizenry



- A climate advising project has begun in all six cities. Partially funded by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy /Motiva, it aims to establish new means to support climate-friendly living.
- The operation of regional energy advising centres has also begun, with the support of the Ministry of Employment and the Economy /Motiva.



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## 4<sup>th</sup> initiative: Climate-conscious budgeting



- The aim is to permanently integrate the reduction of greenhouse gases with the city budget and annual management.
- Climate and emission reduction targets have been set in city strategies, as have operative budget aims.
- Progress towards the objectives is monitored as part of the strategy and financial reporting.
- Means are being developed for assessing the climate effects of investments in particular and other aspects of environmental accounting. This work is conducted as part of the preparation of the Ecological Sustainability Indicators of the six cities.



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## 5<sup>th</sup> initiative: Developing eco-support activities



- After proven success in the Helsinki Metropolitan area, eco-support activities have been extended to all six cities.
- At workplaces, appointed eco-support persons have created savings through e.g. reduced paper consumption and improved waste sorting.
- The activities positively supplement routine tasks for eco-support persons.



## 6<sup>th</sup> initiative: Reducing transport emissions



- The capacities of the six cities for video and online conferences have been assessed within the initiative.
- The mayors and the preparation group have already held their first video conferences.
- Connections are still in development, but e.g. a Lync-based video conference can already be organized at each work point.





# New initiatives of the Climate Network of City Leaders



7. Assessment of ability of the large cities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2020.
8. Support for State and municipal climate partnership initiatives.
9. Introduction and promotion of low-emission cars in large cities.
10. Enhanced climate cooperation between cities and small and medium-sized companies.





## 7<sup>th</sup> initiative: The ability of large cities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2020



- The 20% reduction target is the first step. The EU has planned to increase the target to 30%, with the long-term goal of 50% emission reductions by 2050. For this reason, the opportunities for and costs of more strict emission reduction targets should be investigated
- The large cities will jointly conduct the investigation, and the preparation and monitoring of Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAP) will be unified.
- The Climate Network of City Leaders participates in the operations of the Covenant of Mayors network, and encourages other cities to join.
- The Climate Network of City Leaders will be registered as an official member of the Covenant of Mayors network.



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## 8<sup>th</sup> Initiative: Supporting State and municipal partnerships



- The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities has started a project in cooperation with various municipalities, which investigates the opportunities for a State and municipal climate agreement. The participating municipalities commit to implement joint emission reduction measures, and to agree on funding measures.
- State subsidization will be sought, especially when municipalities commit to emission reductions that are more ambitious than EU targets.
- In Norway, the State “buys” emission reductions that would otherwise be beyond municipal reach. The Finnish State and municipalities should jointly investigate whether this kind of an operational model can be adopted. New financing models to implement emission reductions should be simultaneously investigated.



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## 9<sup>th</sup> initiative: The use of low-emission vehicles is promoted in large cities



- Traffic accounts for around 20% of greenhouse gas emissions, most from road traffic. The EU objective is to reduce CO2 emissions of cars below 100 g/km by 2020.
- Electric cars, hybrids, and low-consumption internal combustion engines are already below this level. Increased popularity of gas and flexi-fuel cars reduces emissions.
- Cities can promote low-emission cars by acquiring them for their own use, and by setting emission criteria for city vehicle acquisitions. Parking benefits can also be granted to low-emission cars. Increasing the number of charging points also supports electric car use.
- A survey will be done on means for increasing the number of low-emission cars. Emission criteria and procedures used by the cities in bus traffic bidding competitions will be investigated.
- The State can support low-emission vehicle acquisition e.g. by granting tax benefits.

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## 10<sup>th</sup> initiative: Increased city and enterprise cooperation

- Small and medium-sized companies have many opportunities to participate in reducing climate emissions, but they often lack the time or information. Cities can help.
- In the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, a volunteer environmental system has been set up for small and medium-sized companies (Ekokompassi) as part of the municipal climate information services. Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment have developed a corresponding EcoStart environmental system.
- These eco-efficient systems help SMEs to reduce emissions, meet client's environmental requirements, and to be more competitive.
- We encourage the cities to increase cooperation with SMEs to reduce emissions and develop climate-friendly procedures.



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