



Sopot, Turku and Nacka, 13 May 2005

## Invitation to Leaders and Actors of good city development and environment in all Baltic Cities

Dear Sir/Madame

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the UBC Commission on Environment meeting in Sopot 20-21 June 2005.

The Baltic Sea Region is no longer a periphery of Europe. As a result of the enlargement of the European Union the region is now closely integrated with the rest of the continent and is emerging as a major player in the northeast of Europe. The Baltic Sea Region has now a challenge to position itself within this geographical reality as a European model region in environmental protection and sustainable development. The Baltic Sea Region cities should strive for positioning themselves as the most important actor in the process of developing the region's future.

To address the issue, i.e. how to make use of the cities' potential in the development of an environmental friendly Baltic Sea Region, we would like to warmly welcome you to the Union of the Baltic Cities, Commission on Environment meeting in the beautiful beach city of Sopot, 20-21 June 2005.

The aim of the meeting is to address the following questions:

- *In what direction are we heading?* The status and the monitoring of the UBC Agenda 21 Action Programme 2004-2009 – Roadmap for Sustainable Baltic Cities will be presented at the meeting. The monitoring of the programme and the cities progress towards sustainable development of the UBC member cities is carried out in the UBC Sustainable Development Survey. The first out of three surveys that will be conducted during the programme period were completed during spring 2005. The findings of the survey, with return rate of 72 %, will be presented and serve as the starting point for our discussions.

- *What has already been done to improve the situation?* Presentation from outstanding cities singled out by the UBC sustainable development survey. The best practices represent focus areas of our Agenda 21 Action Programme; sustainable transport, energy, nature protection and a good living environment.

An excursion to interesting project sites in the Sopot region, for example the pedagogic nature path “Stream walk of Sopot” will be organised.

- *What will the future look like?* In the workshop the future work of EnvCom will be addressed. How should the BSR cities act to become more visible stakeholders and how could the EnvCom serve as a platform to reach the goal.

The UBC Commission on Environment meets twice a year, bringing together actors and decision makers in the fields of environment and sustainability from the whole Baltic Sea Region. These gatherings are an occasion not only to learn from others’ experiences but also to address common challenges and opportunities.

*We are looking forward to your fruitful participation and innovative contribution!*

Sincerely yours,

*Jacek Karnowski*

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Mayor of Sopot

*Mikko Jokinen*

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Co-Chair, UBC EnvCom

*Guldbrand Skjönberg*

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