

**XV UBC General Conference**

**Kaunas, Lithuania, 15-18 October 2019**

## **Resolution on Climate Change Adaptation and Civil Protection**

Societies in coastal areas are especially vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather. The impact of climate change in cities is already present, for example by more frequent floods and heat waves. Building climate resilient cities and preparing for the consequences of climate change are therefore of great importance especially for cities in the Baltic Sea Region. The UBC General Conference adopted its first UBC Resolution on Climate Change in 2007. Ten years later, the UBC started a strategic cooperation with the CDP, which has built the most comprehensive collection of self-reported environmental data in the world. Contributing to a more sustainable, attractive, and resilient Baltic Sea Region, has been an area of focus for UBC for its whole existence.

The UBC Resolution on the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals was adopted at the XIV UBC General Conference in Växjö, Sweden, in October 2017. The resolution stressed the importance of further mobilizing the potential and cooperation in achieving common goals; that cities are the key actors in making a positive change; and that the UBC will continue to focus on responding to climate change in alignment with the Paris Agreement. By adopting the resolution, the UBC committed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, with special focus on goal 11: "Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is crucial for reaching a sustainable world in 2030, and cities are vital in this change.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is a 15-year, voluntary, non-binding agreement, endorsed by the UN General Assembly following the 2015 Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR). It recognizes the role of local governments in reducing disaster risk, including environmental and biological hazards and risks. The Paris Agreement, reached at the UNFCCC COP21 in 2015, recognizes in Article 7 the importance of ensuring an adequate adaptation response in the context of the temperature goal outlined in the Paris Agreement, and that adaptation is a global challenge faced by all with local, subnational, national, regional and international dimensions. Adaptation is key in responding to climate change to protect people, livelihoods and ecosystems. The Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) states that an integration of adaptation into spatial planning, sectoral and local policymaking, design and decision-making, including establishing synergies with preparedness and disaster risk reduction, is of high importance.

Upon the XV UBC General Conference, we once again emphasize the urgency for combating climate change. In the light of earlier UBC resolutions mentioned, the SDG's, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework, the EUSBSR and UBC's long background in climate change adaptation, the UBC recognizes the need of integrated adaptation and civil protection policies, particularly long-term climate risk assessments to be an integral part of local spatial planning and daily management of cities. To reach a

truly sustainable Baltic Sea Region, UBC members must respond to climate change by becoming resilient and adaptive, and by protecting civilians from the negative consequences of climate change. The UBC members have great potential in becoming leaders in climate adaptation and civil protection. We urge cities to investigate risks, vulnerabilities and consequences of climate change, and plan for adaptation via local plans for climate change mitigation and adaptation, such as SECAPs (Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan, Covenant of Mayors). Furthermore, we encourage cities to review the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals on a local level.

This resolution calls for **increased action and mobilization on climate adaptation**, as laid out also in the UBC Sustainability Action Programme. By using its extensive network and partnership, UBC will successfully **cooperate in the field of climate adaptation and civil protection**, establishing good practices that are globally relevant. UBC will provide support to its members, e.g. through establishing an Internal Climate Adaptation Working Group, to carry out Climate Risk, Vulnerability and Impact Assessments, as called for and outlined by the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. The UBC will **continue to proactively support the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, by also including the perspective of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction**. Only by approaching the challenges connected to the changing climate holistically, can the UBC cities realize a truly sustainable development. The cities' civil protection perspective should be mainstreamed into their work on climate change adaptation. Thus, the UBC will work for **harmonized policies and a wider discussion** on adaptation and civil protection, while **acknowledging the role and strengthening the capacities of local authorities**.