

To: 86 UBC Executive Board Meeting 28 October, 2020 (online)
follow-up from 85 UBC EBM

Severe waste water treatment problem in Guatemala
Call for support – first steps of cooperation

At the 85th UBC Executive Board Meeting, on-line, 17 April 2020 12, Rostock asked for support in the activities to save the Lake Atitlán in Guatemala from biological collapses using own experience and the cooperation with LVRLAC (Lake Victoria Region Local Authorities Cooperation, lvrlac.org). The City of Rostock is holding a friendship with the City of Panajachel (www.municipalidaddepanajachel.gob.gt) which is situated at the shore of that Lake. The responsible entity is the Guatemalan Governmental Environmental Office AMSCLAE (**A**utoridad para el **M**anejo **S**ustentable de la **C**uenca del **L**ago de **A**titlán y su **E**ntorno, English: *Authority for the Sustainable Management of Lake Atitlan Basin and Its Environment*, www.amsclae.gob.gt)

UBC has a wide expert knowledge in all its member cities and, in a concentrated manner, within the UBC Commission on Sustainable Cities. So the aim is to connect the experts from the City of Panajachel and the AMSCLAE with cities and experts facing similar challenges.

Since April, first contacts have been made: The AMSCLAE expert Dr. Iván Azurdia Bravo was connected to the LVRLAC, especially to the Managing Office lead by Mercy Stephen Sebuliba. It was of great value to receive the lesson and presentation on the Lake Victoria Lake and Basin of Prof. Faustino L. Orach-Meza, UNESCO consultant, on 03 September 2020 at the 'Lead Partners Interagency Network Forum on reactivation and promotion of the Lake Victoria Biosphere reserve proposal from UNESCO'. On 06 October a smaller follow-up meeting between Mercy Sebuliba, Iván Azurdia and Karin Wohlgemuth took place. So the first links are made thanks to UBC.

The Guatemalans took the advice of Björn Grönholm/ UBC Commission of Sustainable Cities to take part in the World Water Congress & Exhibition to be held in Copenhagen on 18-23 October 2020. Due to the actual Corona situation, it was postponed to 9 – 14 May 2021. The Guatemalan colleagues are saving the date in order to get involved.

Meanwhile, in the City of Panajachel a new waste water plant was finished in an improper way (the reasons of that situation are under evaluation) and could not be put in function. At the moment a redesign is being done, lead by the AMSCLAE Office and accompanied from a distance by experts from Rostock. This may show you the complexity of the problem.

For 2021 it is planned to have the Guatemalan specialists in Europe. They shall combine their stay with the participation in the World Water Congress & Exhibition in May 2021.

During this visit we would be glad to establish a personal connection with UBC experts.

Furthermore, it would be very helpful if the Mayor of Panajachel and some experts could be invited to participate in the XVI UBC General Conference in St. Petersburg.

Karin Wohlgemuth, City of Rostock, 27 October 2020