



City of
Gothenburg

**THE CITY OF GOTHENBURG'S RESPONSE TO
THE CONSULTATION ON THE FINAL
ASSESSMENT OF THE 6TH ENVIRONMENT
ACTION PROGRAMME**

The City of Gothenburg welcomes the consultation on the 6th Environment Action Programme (EAP) and believes that the review of it will lead to positive measures. Those issues are of great importance for Gothenburg and we have developed our position in a close cooperation with Eurocities.

The 6th EAP has helped to strengthen the profile of environment at EU level. It has also helped with the adoption of some environmental legislation that would probably not have gone through without the action programme.

The 6th EAP has however not achieved all its objectives. The EU is far from achieving a decoupling of economic growth and the negative impact of material use. The four priority areas should continue to be high priorities. Furthermore the legislation that has been put in place may need to be reinforced or complemented by other instruments.

The City of Gothenburg believes that a new strategic document for the EU environmental policy is needed. The City of Gothenburg strongly supports a continued possibility to work on environmental issues within the framework of a 7th EAP.

With respect to the consultation on the 6th Environment Action Programme, the City of Gothenburg recommends:

1. An ambitious vision and clear strategy: We believe the EU needs an ambitious policy framework with a clear environmental dimension. Well-defined environmental principles, objectives, targets and timeframes are needed. Promoting an integrated approach is essential, both in terms of policies and funding instruments. The new strategy must be developed in close consultation with stakeholders.

2. Provide the space to act: Cities need space to act, either through an urban thematic strategy in an environmental programme or a more general process. Integrated local development in and around our big cities is essential to addressing social, economic and environmental issues together and coordinating longer-term planning. Working on different spatial levels (neighbourhood, city, city-region, region) and through broad-based local partnerships. Empowering big cities to take the lead in this process will help Europe reach its goals of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

3. Stimulate the change needed: We would like to see changes at EU level to improve the mechanisms for monitoring environmental policies. This should include means to improve the implementation of environmental policy at national level (including the use of source based targets, encouraging the national level to cooperate more closely with their cities to provide the necessary tools - training, guidance, orientations, expertise). We would like to see a continuation of the approach to integrate an environmental dimension in all EU policies and the development of measurable, reportable and verifiable sustainable objectives.

4. Set ambitious goals and promote innovation: Not all of the objectives set out in 2002 have been achieved. But it is important to keep the ambition high and to promote innovation in solutions, partnerships, working methods and financing. Cities are uniquely placed to pilot new solutions as they provide a critical mass of inhabitants, economic activity, research institutions and businesses for testing and rolling-out new ideas.

5. Improve the instruments available for the diversity of needs: In order to face the challenges of the current context, we will need even better instruments. From environmental governance, to information sharing, legislation, economic incentives, better implementation procedures and a wider range of funding instruments and options. In doing this, it is important to bear in mind the

considerable differences that still exist between countries, regions and cities in Europe. This will mean some flexibility to allow territories to cope with their different circumstances.

6. Design funding instruments for integrated development: We need a future EU budget and framework that will support our ambition towards low carbon economies. Having the potential to combine different EU funds with other sources of financing, including from the private sector where appropriate, will strengthen the ability of cities to address physical regeneration, social inclusion, environmental protection and climate change in an integrated way. Existing instruments will clearly not be enough, coupled with the pressures on public budgets that make co-funding extremely difficult. New innovative models for releasing and combining funding are required. This should include consideration of the potential of using revenues from the Emissions Trading Scheme to fund local climate policies, given the percentage of emissions that are produced in cities.

7. Speak to your cities: A regular dialogue with cities on the development of future EU environmental strategies and policies will help ensure that they are designed in the way that will best tackle the reality on the ground. Better designed policies will mean better implementation, and if we fail to meet our environmental targets in our big cities, we will fail to meet them across Europe.

8. Bridge the gap: It is essential that we bridge the gap that currently exists between scientific research and the urban reality. Cities can make even faster progress if research can provide a timely contribution, with appropriate data, innovative tools and technical solutions.