CASCADE
COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION FOR SUPPORTING CLIMATE ADAPTATION

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Joining forces to effectively work with DRR and CCA

CONCLUSIONS FROM CASCADE POLICY DIALOGUE SESSION, 16 OCTOBER 2019

The first Transnational Policy Dialogue meeting of the CASCADE project took place during the Union of the Baltic Cities XV General Conference in Kaunas, Lithuania, 16 October 2019. The objective of the session: "Local perspectives for solving climate change related security risks – joining forces to effectively work with Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation" was to collect input from the cities in the Baltic Sea Region regarding challenges and needs.

The Policy Dialogue is one of five work packages of the CASCADE project and the aim is to enhance and strengthen the other project activities through anchoring the results at the policy level and connecting the project to end-users and practitioners. The overall purpose is to facilitate policy discussions and the involvement of a broad range of end-users in the project's work process.

The conclusions and recommendations from two reports produced in CASCADE were discussed:
"The Sendai Framework in the Baltic Sea Region: Challenges – good practices – way forward"
"The role of local governments in adapting to the climate: overview of regulatory requirements and support mechanisms in the Baltic Sea Region".

A panel consisting of city representatives from Gdańsk (Poland), Jelgava (Latvia), St. Petersburg (Russia) and Kaunas (Lithuania) discussed the measures they are undertaking in their city related to Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and they provided their feedback on the conclusions and recommendations cited in the two reports.

"*The global temperature has increased, and we are witnessing extreme weather leading to unprecedented challenges … now we need to be preparing for other risks that we have not previously prepared for – every country needs to be prepared for a wide range of risks*"

Elena Višnar Malinovská, European Commission's Directorate-General for Climate Action (opening remarks).

"*We are trying to combine the workstreams of the two commissions and create a strong sense in the UBC to work towards building resilience*"

Risto Veivo, Co-chair of the UBC Sustainable Cities Commission (welcoming words).

The XV UBC General Conference adopted a **Resolution on Climate Change Adaptation and Civil Protection.**

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The conclusions presented below are derived from the discussions in the session, a door poll beforehand and a survey sent out to the registered participants after the session, as well as a discussion between the CASCADE partners after the session, with the aim to reflect on the discussions in the session.

Main conclusions from the session

- Most cities in the Baltic Sea Region have suffered from **heavy weather events and flooding** and heavy rains are the biggest threat identified for the city representatives at the UBC General Conference.
- Many **cities are doing a lot towards long-term CCA**; there are many good examples of how they are assessing the risks as well as practical measures undertaken.
- There is a **need to take stock of examples of good solutions of CCA and DRR** measures from different cities and make them available in an online library/database.
- The cities would appreciate **more tools and support from the national level** to effectively work with the implementation of DRR and CCA measures.
- The **lack of political support for DRR prevents effective coordination** and active implementation of the Sendai Framework.
- There is a need to **raise awareness and increase the knowledge about the Sendai Framework** for DRR – especially regarding how the framework can be used as practical guidance and a tool.
- The UBC could provide more information about the **UNDRR Making Cities Resilient Campaign**, and the associated tools.
- **Strengthening political and public support is key for efficient implementation of the Sendai Framework** for DRR – improving the quality of the National Risk Assessments, through involving specific climate change risks will pave the way for more solid decision-making.
- There is a **need to work more actively with climate change risks in the National Risk Assessments**; however, those responsible for the assessments do not have sufficient knowledge on how to integrate climate change into the relevant methodologies.
- To **increase the cooperation between the sectors** – which is necessary for effective implementation of CCA and DRR measures – each sector must increase the knowledge and understanding of the needs.