

AALBORG+10 - INSPIRING FUTURES

OUR COMMON VISION

We, European local governments united in the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign, assembled at the Aalborg+10 Conference, confirm our shared vision of a sustainable future for our communities.

Our vision is of cities and towns that are inclusive, prosperous, creative and sustainable, and that provide a good quality of life for all citizens and enable their participation in all aspects of urban life. Since the Rio Summit in 1992 and the adoption in 1994 of the sustainability principles embodied in the Charter of European Cities & Towns Towards Sustainability - Aalborg Charter, our vision has grown through the 1996 Lisbon Action Plan 'From Charter to Action', the 2000 'Hannover Call of European Municipal Leaders at the Turn of the 21st Century', and the 2002 'Johannesburg Call'. We consider the 2004 'Inspiring Futures - Aalborg+10' Conference a milestone in this ongoing process.

OUR CHALLENGES

In carrying out our responsibilities of local government and management, we are increasingly subject to the combined pressures of economic globalisation and technological development. We are confronted with fundamental economic change as well as with man-made and natural threats to our communities and resources.

We face daunting challenges: creating employment in a knowledge-based economy, combating poverty and social exclusion, securing effective protection for our environment, reducing our ecological footprint, responding to demographic changes and managing cultural diversity, as well as averting conflict and sustaining peace in formerly war-torn communities.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

We have a central role in ensuring sustainable development whilst meeting our challenges in cooperation with all other spheres of government. This central role demands that we take a more energetic and integrated approach to local policy making, harmonising environmental, social, cultural and economic objectives. At the same time we must ensure that our efforts to improve our local quality of life do not jeopardise that of people in other parts of the world or of future generations.

We are the level of government closest to European citizens on a day-to-day basis, and have unique opportunities to influence individual behaviour towards sustainability through education and awareness raising.

We can provide local support in implementing European strategies and policies such as the Lisbon Strategy, the European Sustainable Development Strategy, the Sixth Environment Action Programme, the forthcoming EU Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, and European initiatives on climate change, on health, on governance, and in implementing the UN Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

OUR RESPONSE: THE AALBORG COMMITMENTS

We, European local governments, take up these challenges and accept our responsibilities. We adopt '**The Aalborg Commitments**' as a significant step forward, from Agenda to strategic and co-ordinated Action.

We will accelerate our efforts towards local sustainable development, drawing inspiration from the sustainability principles set out in the Aalborg Charter. We aim to translate our common vision for sustainable urban futures into tangible sustainability targets and action at local level.

We adopt the Aalborg Commitments as a resource from which we will select priorities appropriate to our local situations and needs, which also take into account the global impact of our activities. We will initiate a local, participatory process to identify specific targets and time frames to monitor progress towards achieving them.

OUR PARTNERS

We urge all European local and regional governments to join us in signing the Aalborg Commitments, and to inform the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign of their decision.

We urge our national associations of regional and local authorities, our national governments, the European Commission, and other European Institutions to recognise the Aalborg Commitments as a significant contribution to Europe's efforts towards sustainability, and to support our work with the Aalborg Commitments.

We urge local government networks, including the Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling (ACRR), Climate Alliance - Klima-Bündnis - Alianza del Clima e.V., Council of European Municipalities & Regions (CEMR), Energie-Cités, EUROCITIES, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, Medcities, Union of Baltic Cities (UBC) and World Health Organisation (WHO) - Healthy Cities, to support our work with the Aalborg Commitments, to assist us in achieving and monitoring our progress and to make available their respective fields of expertise.

THE AALBORG COMMITMENTS

1 GOVERNANCE

We are committed to energising our decision-making processes through increased participatory democracy.

We will therefore work to:

1. further develop a commonly shared long-term vision for a sustainable city or a town.
2. build participation and sustainable development capacity in the local community and municipal administration.
3. invite all sectors of local society to participate effectively in decision-making.
4. make our decisions open, accountable and transparent.
5. cooperate effectively and in partnership with adjoining municipalities, other cities and towns, and other spheres of government.

2 LOCAL MANAGEMENT TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

We are committed to implementing effective management cycles, from formulation through implementation to evaluation.

We will therefore work to:

1. strengthen Local Agenda 21 or other local sustainability processes and mainstream them into the heart of local government.
2. deliver integrated management towards sustainability, based on the precautionary principle and with regard to the forthcoming EU Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment.
3. set targets and time schemes in the framework of the Aalborg Commitments and create and follow the Aalborg Commitments monitoring review.
4. ensure that sustainability issues are central to urban decision-making processes and that resource allocation is based on strong and broad sustainability criteria.
5. cooperate with the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign and its networks to monitor and evaluate our progress towards meeting our sustainability targets.

3 NATURAL COMMON GOODS

We are committed to fully assuming our responsibility to protect, to preserve, and to ensure equitable access to natural common goods.

We will therefore work, throughout our community, to:

1. reduce primary energy consumption, and increase the share of renewable energies.
2. improve water quality, save water, and use water more efficiently.
3. promote and increase biodiversity, and extend and care for designated nature areas and green spaces.
4. improve soil quality, preserve ecologically productive land and promote sustainable agriculture and forestry.
5. improve air quality.

4 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND LIFESTYLE CHOICES

We are committed to adopting and facilitating the prudent and efficient use of resources and to encouraging sustainable consumption and production.

We will therefore work, throughout our community, to:

1. avoid and reduce waste, and increase re-use and recycling.
2. manage and treat waste in accordance with best practice standards.
3. avoid unnecessary energy consumption, and improve end-use energy efficiency.
4. undertake sustainable procurement.
5. actively promote sustainable production and consumption, in particular of eco-labelled, organic, ethical and fair trade products.

5 PLANNING AND DESIGN

We are committed to a strategic role for urban planning and design in addressing environmental, social, economic, health and cultural issues for the benefit of all.

We will therefore work to:

1. re-use and regenerate derelict or disadvantaged areas.
2. avoid urban sprawl by achieving appropriate urban densities and prioritising brownfield site over greenfield site development.
3. ensure the mixed use of buildings and developments with a good balance of jobs, housing and services, giving priority to residential use in city centres.
4. ensure appropriate conservation, renovation and use/re-use of our urban cultural heritage.
5. apply requirements for sustainable design and construction and promote high quality architecture and building technologies.

6 BETTER MOBILITY, LESS TRAFFIC

We recognise the interdependence of transport, health and environment and are committed to strongly promoting sustainable mobility choices.

We will therefore work to:

1. reduce the necessity for private motorised transport and promote attractive alternatives accessible to all.
2. increase the share of journeys made by public transport, on foot and by bicycle.
3. encourage transition to low-emission vehicles.
4. develop an integrated and sustainable urban mobility plan.
5. reduce the impact of transport on the environment and public health.

7 LOCAL ACTION FOR HEALTH

We are committed to protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of our citizens.

We will therefore work to:

1. raise awareness and take action on the wider determinants of health, most of which lie outside the health sector.
2. promote city health development planning, which provides our cities with a means to build and maintain strategic partnerships for health.
3. reduce inequalities in health and address poverty, which will require regular reporting on progress towards reducing the gaps.
4. promote health impact assessment as a means for all sectors to focus their work on health and the quality of life.
5. mobilise urban planners to integrate health considerations in their planning strategies and initiatives.

8 VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE LOCAL ECONOMY

We are committed to creating and ensuring a vibrant local economy that gives access to employment without damaging the environment.

We will therefore work to:

1. adopt measures that stimulate and support local employment and business start-ups.
2. cooperate with local businesses to promote and implement good corporate practice.
3. develop and implement sustainability principles for the location of businesses.
4. encourage markets for high quality local and regional produce.
5. promote sustainable local tourism.

9 SOCIAL EQUITY AND JUSTICE

We are committed to securing inclusive and supportive communities.

We will therefore work to:

1. develop and implement programmes to prevent and alleviate poverty.
2. ensure equitable access to public services, education, employment opportunities, training, information, and cultural activities.
3. foster social inclusion and gender equality.
4. improve community safety and security.
5. secure good quality and socially integrated housing and living conditions.

10 LOCAL TO GLOBAL

We are committed to assuming our global responsibility for peace, justice, equity, sustainable development and climate protection.

We will therefore work to:

1. develop and follow a strategic and integrated approach to mitigate climate change, and work towards a sustainable level of greenhouse gas emissions.
2. mainstream climate protection policy into our policies in the areas of energy, transport, procurement, waste, agriculture, and forestry.
3. raise awareness of the causes and probable impacts of climate change, and integrate preventive actions into our climate change policy.
4. reduce our impact on the global environment and promote the principle of environmental justice.
5. strengthen the international cooperation of towns and cities and develop local responses to global problems in partnership with local governments, communities and relevant stakeholders.

RECOGNISING AND APPROVING THE ABOVE, WITH MY/ OUR SIGNATURE, I/ WE:

1. endorse the Aalborg Charter.
2. endorse the Aalborg Commitments.
3. agree to produce an integrated **Aalborg Commitments baseline review** as a starting point for our target setting process within 12 months following the date of our signature. This review will include a policy context, refer to existing political commitments and describe current challenges.
4. agree to enter into a **local participatory target setting process** that incorporates existing Local Agenda 21 or other local sustainability action planning and takes into consideration the results of the local baseline review.
5. agree to prioritise our tasks, aiming to address the ten Commitments on:

1	GOVERNANCE	6	BETTER MOBILITY, LESS TRAFFIC
2	LOCAL MANAGEMENT TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY	7	LOCAL ACTION FOR HEALTH
3	NATURAL COMMON GOODS	8	VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE LOCAL ECONOMY
4	RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND LIFESTYLE CHOICES	9	SOCIAL EQUITY AND JUSTICE
5	PLANNING AND DESIGN	10	LOCAL TO GLOBAL
6. agree to **set individual local targets** within 24 months following the date of our signature, taking into account the Aalborg Commitments Annex as an inspirational resource, and to set time frames related to the targets that are suitable to demonstrate progress on our Commitments.
7. agree to make a regular **Aalborg Commitments monitoring review** of our achievements available to our citizens.
8. agree **to regularly provide information** on our targets and our progress to the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign and, through this cooperation, to review progress and learn from each other. A first European assessment is scheduled for the year 2010, with subsequent reviews scheduled in five-year cycles.

Full name/s and function/s in block capitals:

Local / regional government or organisation:

Place and date of signing:

Signature/s:
