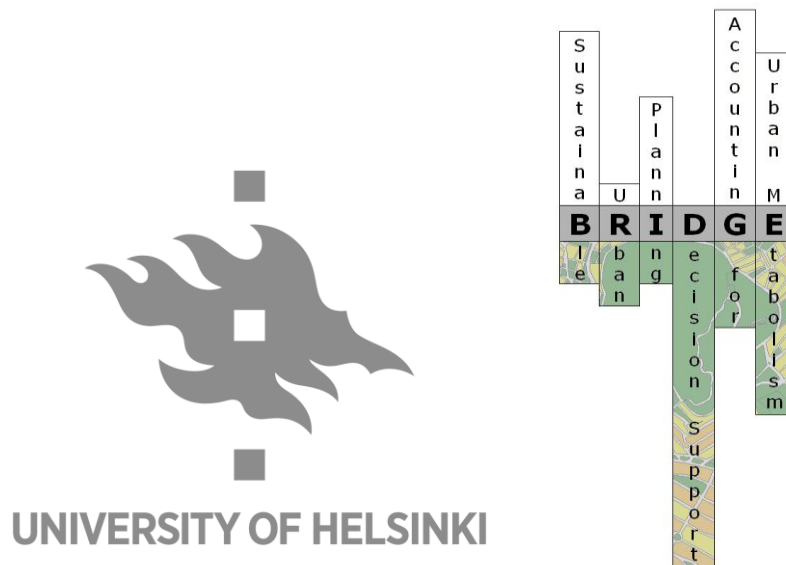


Kimmo Kurunmäki

**Sustainable Urban Planning in Helsinki,
Minutes of the 1st CoP meeting**

Helsinki, June 15, 2009



Preface- acknowledgements

The BRIDGE research project has now had its first meeting with local planning practitioners. The kick-off was in Helsinki, where preparations for getting the practitioners and researchers together started earlier in the spring. The City Planning Department of the City of Helsinki and the University of Helsinki BRIDGE team identified the core experts to invite to the kick-off meeting. As a result, a very good composition of experts from different Departments of the City of Helsinki joined to discuss topical issues regarding sustainability in urban planning.

One of the aims of the BRIDGE project is that in each of the case study cities (Athens, Florence, Gliwice, Helsinki, and London) a Community of Practice (CoP) will be formed. The community will bring together practitioners and researches in the field of urban planning. On a regular basis they will discuss the state of the art of sustainable urban planning in the respective communities and will learn from each others expertise. For this aim, the Helsinki kick-off was successful. In a more particular sense, the participants identified sustainability criteria and indicators relevant to the urban planning practice in Helsinki. This is essential information for BRIDGE researchers in order to be able to develop a Decision Support System accounting for urban bio-physical metabolism and its environmental and socio-economic consequences. Ultimately, this Decision Support System will assist urban planners in decision-making in the field of urban metabolism.

I would like to thank all the participants for their valuable contribution in the Helsinki kick-off meeting!

Kimmo Kurunmäki

Introduction

In the context of the BRIDGE¹ project, a meeting has been organised on June 15 2009 in Helsinki. The gathering brought together a group of 20 people including urban planners, an urban forester researcher, an air protection expert and several researchers in the field of urban planning and urban metabolism (annex 1). The meeting had the following objectives:

- To share experience on sustainable urban planning in Helsinki between urban planners and researchers in the field of urban metabolism
- To build a network, i.e. Community of Practice on sustainable urban planning in Helsinki
- To discuss priorities in urban planning in the city of Helsinki, urban planning objectives and indicators.

As the meeting was a first gathering between BRIDGE researchers and professionals in the field of urban planning, relatively much time was planned to get to know each others' perceptions on the urban planning practices in Helsinki from a sustainability point of view (see annex 2). The introduction of Mr. Alpo Tani on Sustainable Urban Planning in Helsinki and the walking tour in Kumpula-Arabianranta in the light of this objective.

The urban planning priorities, objectives and indicators will form a basis of an impact assessment methodology in the form of a Decision Support System (DSS). The DSS aims to assist urban planners in decision making in the field of urban metabolism, especially where it concerns issues in relation to water, energy, carbon and pollutants.

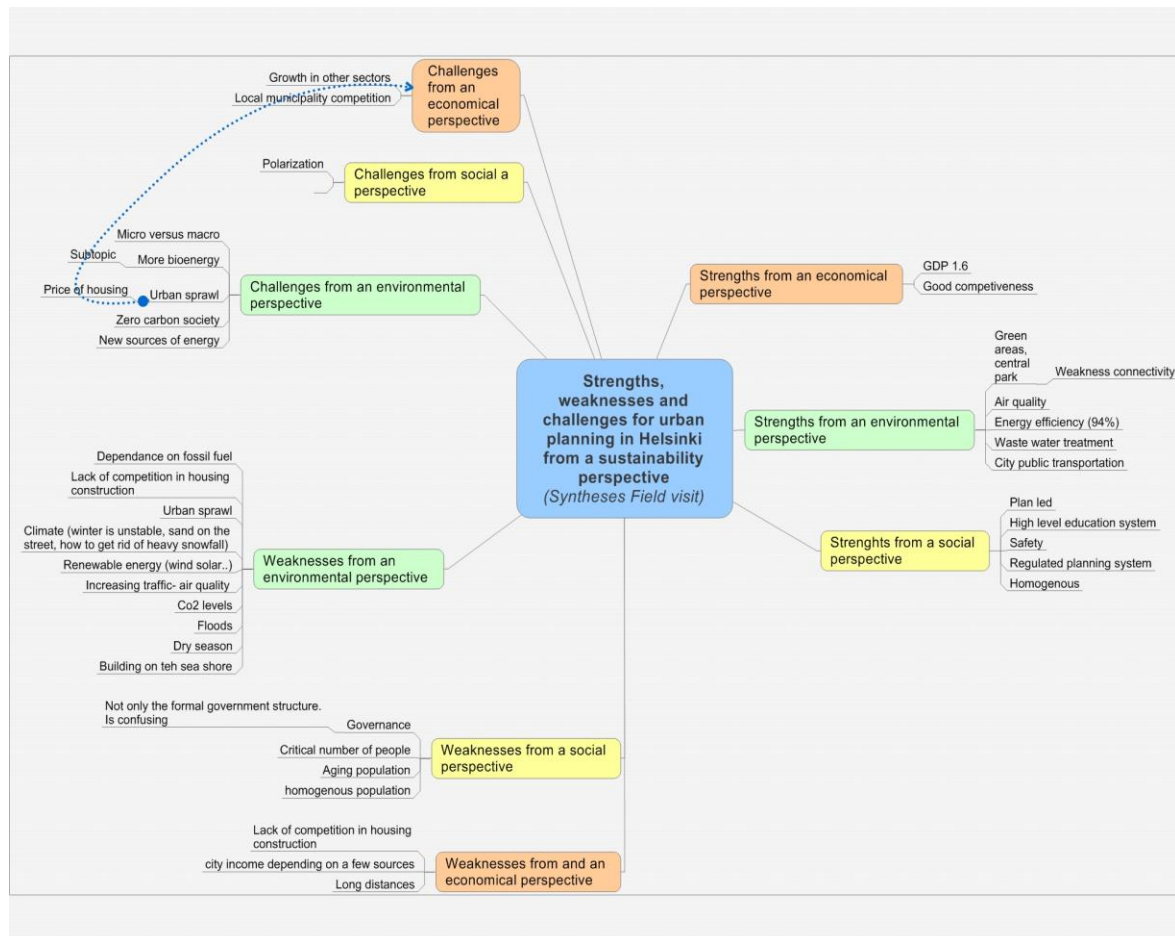
This report summarizes the major results of the discussions and highlights the decisions made regarding the follow up of the meeting (chapter 2).

¹ BRIDGE is the abbreviation of 'Sustainable Urban Planning Decision Support Accounting for Urban Metabolism'

Results

Walking tour: syntheses

The walking tour in the Kumpula-Arabianranta area enabled the participants to make explicit and/or find out about strengths and weaknesses in the current planning practices from a sustainability point of view. Moreover, it helped to discuss a number of challenges for a more sustainable planning in Helsinki.



Mind map: Strengths, weaknesses and challenges for urban planning in Helsinki from a sustainability perspective

Planning priorities, objectives and indicators

The BRIDGE project aims to illustrate urban planners the advantages of accounting for environmental issues on a routine basis in urban planning decisions. In the context of the BRIDGE project, a Decision Support System will be developed that aims to assist urban planners in decision-making in the field of urban metabolism, especially where it concerns issues in relation to water, energy, carbon and pollutants.

To ensure the usefulness of the DSS to its potential users, i.e. professionals in the field of urban planners in Helsinki, the design of the DSS should be shaped by planning priorities, planning objectives and indicators that are considered relevant to the city of Helsinki.

Planning objectives

The open discussion in the afternoon session allowed participants to establish the planning priorities in Helsinki, which include: housing, public transport and energy sources. Based on these priorities, and taking into account the previously defined challenges, the core sustainability objectives were established for the city by the participants: These objectives can be summarized as follows:

- ***Optimize energy consumption:*** save energy and increase use of renewable energy sources.
- ***Protect the water balance:*** manage storm water to minimize flooding and to avoid water pollution through untreated surface runoff.
- ***Improve air quality:*** minimize emissions and, particularly, reduce CO₂ emissions to mitigate climate change.
- ***Enhance human well-being in the city:*** improve attractiveness of housing, promote a spatial balance, and improve the public transport system.

The objectives above will be used to determine sustainability targets (mainly based on European Directives and requirements) and indicators.

Indicators

Taking into account the availability of data (as per Kimmo Kurunmäki's presentation) and the urban metabolism components of BRIDGE, the following preliminary indicators are suggested to monitor progress towards the established objectives:

BRIDGE Component	Indicators
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy demand (i.e. electricity consumption per capita and sectoral split: households, industry, transport and services); • Energy balance in buildings (i.e. energy ratings and heating); and • Percentage of energy from renewable sources.
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water balance: precipitation, surface run-off, evapotranspiration, filtration, and flooding events; and • Water quantity and quality (i.e. BOD, N, P load) at discharge point.
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentration of pollutants (methane, ozone, sulfates, nitrates, particulate matter, etc.); • Greenhouse gases and CO₂ emissions per capita and sectoral split: households, industry, transport and services); and • Emissions from transport and split per type (private and public).
Human Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new developments in brownfield sites versus number of developments in greenfield sites; • Density of developments (persons/m²); and • Population exposure to air pollutants.

Additional quantitative data will include: population census and population change, household size, 0 carbon developments, car ownership, traffic counts and travel to work data. Qualitative data may also be included to address urban sprawl (e.g. CORINE land cover and existing/proposed land use zonings), as well as attractiveness of new developments (e.g. amenity areas, services, etc.).

Note that the above indicators are preliminary. These will be further discussed at the second Community of Practice meeting.

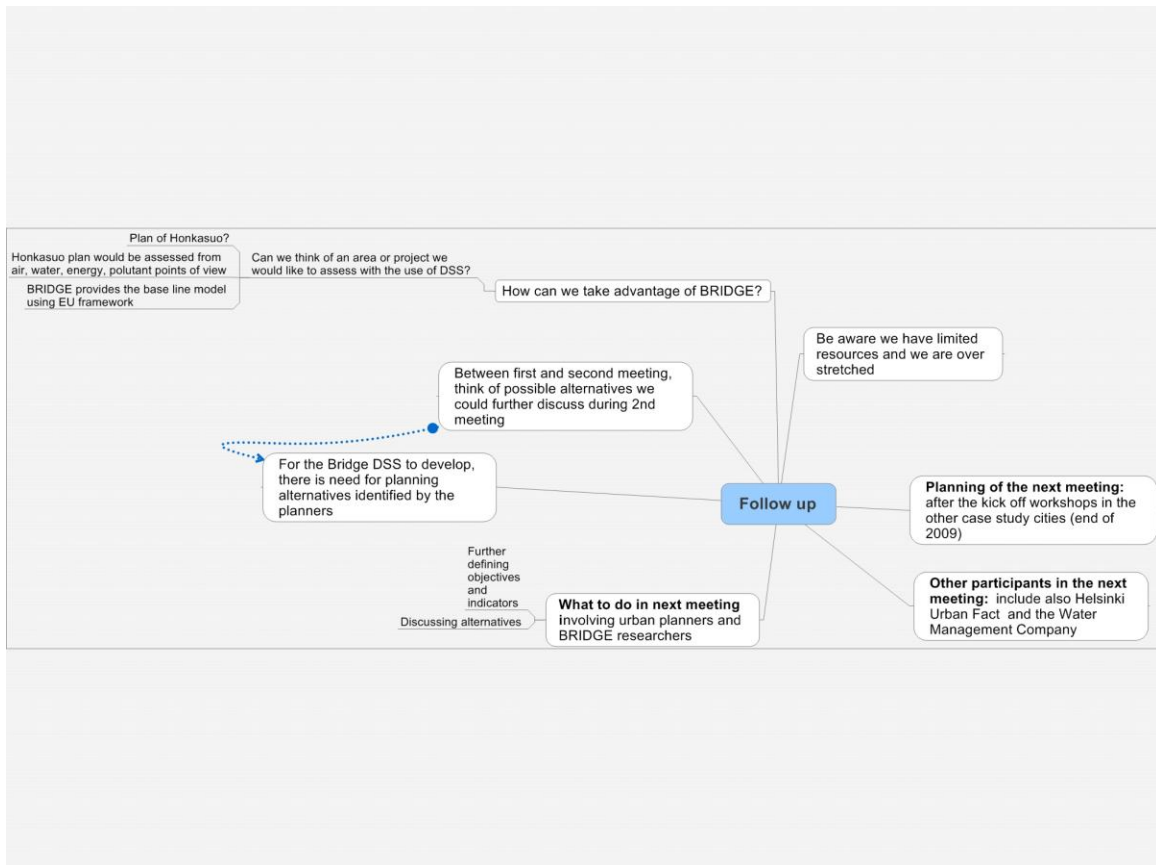
The preliminary indicators above can be used to assess planning alternatives

Follow up

It was agreed at the meeting that the Honkasuo area will be taken as a test ground to assess planning alternatives with the use of the preliminary indicators mentioned in the previous section. Even before a second meeting in which both the planning practitioners and researchers from the BRIDGE project will participate, the city planners will provide the adopted plan and propose a number of development alternatives for the area.

At the second meeting, the evaluation of these alternatives will be undertaken by measuring, modeling and assessing any differences in the indicators. The results will be compared to establish which is (are) the most sustainable planning alternative(s) for Honkasuo. Additional alternatives will also be discussed at a second meeting

The figure hereafter shows the suggestions for a next meeting.



Annex 1: List of participants

Institute	Name	Notes
City of Helsinki		
City Planning Department	Rikhard Manninen, head of research office	
	Alpo Tani, planner	
	Douglas Gordon, planner	
Environment Centre	Pauliina Jalonen, planner, environmental economy	
	Päivi Kippo-Edlund, head of research	9-12
	Markus Lukin, planner, environmental economy	9-12
Economic and Planning Centre	Ifa Kytösaho, development engineer	
Helsingin Energia	Tea Erätuuli, senior expert	
Public Works Department	Tiina Saukkonen, urban forester	
Foundation for Research and Technology, Greece	Nektarios Chrysoulakis, Bridge coordinator	
University of Athens	Alexandros Karvounis	
Trinity College Dublin	Ainhoa Gonzalez	
Wageningen UR/Alterra, the Netherlands	Annemarie Groot	
Wageningen UR/Alterra, the Netherlands	Eddy Moors	
Wageningen UR/Alterra, the Netherlands	Diego Garcia-Landarte Puertas	
University of Helsinki	Leena Järvi	
University of Helsinki	Kimmo Kurunmäki	
University of Helsinki	Hanna Ristisuo	
	Heikki Setälä	
University of Aveiro	Anabela Carvalho	
	Eduardo Castro	

Annex 2: Programme

09.00 - 09.30: Welcome and introduction (coffee/tea served) (*Kimmo Kurunmäki, University of Helsinki, Helsinki CoP coordinator*)

09.30 - 09.45: BRIDGE project (*Nektarios Chrysoulakis, FORTH – Hellas; BRIDGE project coordinator*)

09.45 - 10.30: Sustainable Urban Planning in Helsinki: Issues and challenges (*Alpo Tani, planner, City Planning Department*). Discussion among all participants.

10.30 - 12.00: Current urban planning practices in Helsinki and challenges for a more sustainable future: Walking tour in Kumpula-Arabianranta and discussions on site (*Rikhard Manninen, Head of Research Office, City Planning Department*). Introduction to the SMEAR III station (*Leena Järvi, Bridge researcher*)

12.00 – 12.45: Lunch

12.45 - 15.30: Towards a Decision Support System on sustainable urban planning: Open discussion on planning objectives and indicators relevant for Helsinki. Answers of the questionnaire as starting points. (Coffee/tea served)

15.30 - 16.00: Follow-up, including discussion on the local experts' meetings in the future as Helsinki Community of Practice.