

WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAMME

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BRIDGE PARTNERS:

1. Foundation for Research and Technology - Hellas, Greece (Co-ordinator)
2. King's College London, United Kingdom
3. Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Italy
4. Instytut Ekologii Terenów Uprzemysłowych, Poland
5. Technical University of Madrid, Spain
6. University of Aveiro, Portugal
7. University of Basel, Switzerland
8. Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
9. University of Helsinki, Finland
10. National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece
11. Centro Euro-Mediterraneo per i Cambiamenti Climatici S.c.a.r.l., Italy
12. Météo France, France
13. Alterra B.V., The Netherlands
14. University of Southampton, United Kingdom

CONTACT:

BRIDGE project coordinator: Dr. Nektarios Chrysoulakis,
Tel.: +30 2810 391762, Fax: +30 2810 391761, e-mail: zedd2@iacm.forth.gr
Foundation for Research and Technology - Hellas (FORTH)
N. Plastira 100, Vassilika Vouton, P.O. Box 1385, GR-71110, Heraklion, Crete, Greece

Case study leader London Prof. Sue Grimmond,
Tel. +44 20 7848 2275, Fax +44 20 7848 2287, e-mail: Sue.Grimmond@kcl.ac.uk
Environmental Monitoring and Modelling Group, King's College London
The Strand, London WC2R 2LS, United Kingdom

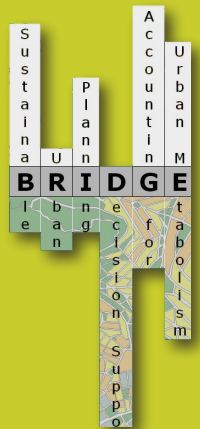
Coordinator Community of Practice London Prof. Sean Beevers,
Tel. +44 207 848 4009, e-mail: sean.beevers@kcl.ac.uk
Environmental Research Group, King's College London
150 Stamford Street, London, SE1 9NH, United Kingdom



www.bridge-fp7.eu

BRIDGE

SUSTAINABLE URBAN PLANNING DECISION SUPPORT ACCOUNTING FOR URBAN METABOLISM



THE PROGRAMME

THE BRIDGE PROGRAMME WAS LAUNCHED IN 2008 TO ASSIST URBAN PLANNERS TO DESIGN, GENERATE OR PRESENT ALTERNATIVES TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE CITY.

WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE CITY?

The city is a dynamic system, therefore it is important to understand trends in energy and material flows over time. Urban metabolism is considered as the exchange and transformation of energy and matter between a city and its environment.

BRIDGE will focus on the following components of urban metabolism:

ENERGY

Optimise energy efficiency of the urban structure.

Minimise energy demand of settlements.

Maximise efficient use of energy through building services and energy supply.

Maximise share of renewable energy sources.

Maximise the use of eco-friendly and healthy building materials.

WATER

Minimise primary water consumption.

Minimise impairment of the natural water cycle.

CARBON AND POLLUTANTS

Minimise the emissions to the atmosphere.

Maximize pollutants sinks.

Stabilize and manage contaminated land.

THE BRIDGE MISSION

- To define urban metabolism by means of energy, water, carbon and pollutant fluxes.
- To examine the role of land use and resources use in saving energy, in minimising impairment of the natural water cycle and in removing air pollutants.
- To develop indicators to quantify the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of the above components of urban metabolism.
- To develop a Decision Support System (DSS) based on these indicators.
- To use a DSS as a tool for estimating the economic benefits of alternative land and resource use.
- To design sustainable planning strategies based on these estimations.

The innovation of BRIDGE is the development of a DSS. A DSS is a computer-based information system that may assist urban planners in decision-making by providing a structured presentation of alternatives and mechanisms regarding urban metabolism components (energy, water, carbon and pollutants).

The BRIDGE project will use Communities of Practice as an approach to organize the interaction between professionals in the field of urban planning and urban research scientists. The intention is to launch BRIDGE Communities of Practice in five case study cities i.e., Athens, London, Firenze, Helsinki and Gliwice. The Communities of Practice will create a learning environment for professionals and researchers in the field of city planning.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide the means to:
 - quantitatively estimate the various components of the urban metabolism;
 - quantitatively estimate their environmental impacts;
 - translate the above impacts to socio-economic costs;
 - optimise resources in urban planning.
- Bridge the gap between bio-physical sciences and urban planners by providing the DSS tool.
- Support the development of planning strategies to decouple resource use and economic development.
- Involve local and regional stakeholders.
- Demonstrate the potential of science to support political decision making.

FIVE CITIES - FIVE «ROAD MAPS» TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

Cities in the European Union host 70% of the population and they tend to gather more inhabitants. Regardless of the size, all cities face environmental problems which degrade the quality of life and influence development plans. Their target is the "sustainable city". How can this be achieved? BRIDGE examines five European cities of varying size and character so as to develop tailor made «road maps» towards sustainability. Through this effort, the potential of science to support political decision making will be also demonstrated.



Athens has enjoyed a positive transformation due to the Olympic Games which took place in 2004. However the city still needs to improve air quality, to ameliorate the urban heat island and to increase free and green spaces. At the administrative level, the city needs to entrust science in its development plans so as to comply to local needs and demands.



London a metropolitan centre with the characteristics of a mega-city, faces modifications in its urban microclimate (increased temperature in the city centre, hotter summers, air quality problems) which need to be faced through a solid plan towards urban sustainability. In addition, London will host the Olympic Games 2012, a fact which further increases the potential for measures towards sustainability.

Gliwice is satellite city with an Old Town in the central part and residential districts around the centre. Its challenges towards sustainability include the definition of land use plans, the improvement of buildings through technical and energy efficiency measures, the management of the quantity and quality of water, the protection of the water resources and the improvement in the traffic patterns.



Firenze a medium size city with strong historic character, needs to improve urban mobility as well as to limit emissions of air pollutants, to improve energy efficiency of public and private buildings, to decrease waste production and to raise awareness on environmental responsibility. Answers to local needs are to be defined with the use of recently installed micromet monitoring system capable to record urban mass and energy fluxes.



Helsinki (and its Metropolitan Area) needs to considerably reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to increase the share of renewable energy sources in the production of district heating and electricity, to improve the energy-efficiency of the building stock, to extend the regional public rail transport network, to improve eco-efficiency in construction and service delivery and decrease waste produc-

