

Thematic session on Sustainable Urban Mobility Summary

The thematic session on Sustainable Urban Mobility (SUM) was attended by representatives of cities in Africa, Latin America and Asia. It was the first session of this kind since the initiation of the SUM project in Kisumu, Kenya in 2004. It aimed at raising awareness about the environment-mobility-poverty relationships as the basis of the SUM initiative, and on sharing lessons and experiences of cities active in the mobility field.

The session started with a presentation on the relationships between environment and mobility on the one hand, and between mobility and poverty on the other. It was argued that the extent of these relationships is often overlooked and thus ignored, and that cities can do a lot more to promote mobility that is both pro-environment and pro-poor. The presenter explained the logic of addressing sustainable urban mobility within the EPM context. Within this context, the Sustainable Urban Mobility (SUM) initiative aims to increase the awareness of the environment-mobility-poverty relationships within SCP/LA21 cities and to assist cities with a commitment to promote low-cost mobility.

The support of SCP and its partners can take various forms (e.g. technical advice, training) and cover the entire planning cycle up to the design and monitoring of physical infrastructure interventions. Two presentations were held on the ongoing work in Kisumu, Kenya, the first SUM demonstration project. In Kisumu the work has now reached the demonstration intervention stage. Lessons and experiences about the process and the selection and nature of the demonstration interventions were shared with the audience. An interesting aspect of the Kisumu case is that it has demonstrated that the EPM process steps are equally valid and applicable when applied right from the start to a specific sector, in this case urban mobility. The Environmental Profile prepared for Kisumu focused on mobility and was discussed, together with the Mobility Profile, in a city consultation that had a similar perspective.

The SUM session concluded with a presentation made by the Mobility working group of Bayamo, a LA21 city in Cuba. The presentation covered the background and nature of the demonstration interventions in progress, which include better facilitation and improved services by the horse-drawn carriages as part of the current public transport system.

From the interactions between the presenters and the audience it became clear that the issues of sustainable urban mobility are of increasing importance for many SCP/LA21 cities. Mobility is a multi-faceted issue that can be highly sensitive politically. And since what is desirable for one group may have negative consequences for the other group, it is not an easy issue either.

The power point presentations held during this thematic session are in Annex ...