

# Copenhagen

## Speech: International Conference on Promoting the Low-Carbon Cities 2009 5th October 2009

Good Morning. My name is Klaus Bondam and I am the mayor of the Technical and Environmental Administration in the city of Copenhagen.

First of all I would like to thank the organisers for inviting me here to Japan, to give a presentation of the experiences and goals of the City of Copenhagen. As many of you know, Copenhagen will host the UN Climate Conference COP15 this December. Let us work and hope for an ambitious agreement.

Before I get started – let me tell you a few facts about Copenhagen. Copenhagen is, besides being the capital of Denmark, the centre of the Danish-Swedish Øresund Region. Compared to Tokyo, Copenhagen is a fairly small city, covering only 91,3 square kilometres of urban area, and with 500,000 inhabitants and 15 neighbourhood municipalities. A small city - but a city facing the same environmental and Climate related challenges as larger cities.

During the latest 15 years Copenhagen has reduced its CO2-emissions by 20% - a number which will increase during the next years.

But our commitment to especially energy efficiency was founded long ago. Back in 1925 the first district heating systems was set up in Copenhagen, in 1993 it was made mandatory for buildings in the city to be connected to the district heating system, and since then we have experienced a reduction in the energy consumption and the CO2 emitted.

Therefore we are not starting from scratch, in fact 98% of buildings in Copenhagen are connected to the district heating system and more than 30% of the energy comes from renewable sources, such as wind, biomass and waste incineration.

This August we adopted the ambitious “Copenhagen Climate Plan”. [show English plan] In this plan, Copenhagen has set a CO2 reduction target of 20% reduction from 2005 to 2015, and at the same time, the plan will chart the first steps towards ultimately becoming carbon neutral by 2025.

The Climate Plan contains 50 initiatives, grouped into 6 different action areas:

- Drastically increasing the share of Bio-mass and wind power in the energy supply.
- Promoting green transport, amongst others by supporting an infrastructure which supports the use of electrical and hydrogen powered cars.
- Low energy buildings – Here the city will go in front and upgrade the municipal buildings.
- A focus on citizen participation, which means creating a new science centre and educating the youth.
- We will focus on the climate in city’s developments by setting up low energy demands in new buildings in the city

- Last but not least we will adapt to the weather of the future – by developing an actual Climate Adaptation Plan for the city and create small green areas around in the city – we call these areas Pocket Parks.

We have calculated that the implementation of these initiatives will all together cut carbon emissions by 60%, but to meet the challenges and to reach our goals of being a carbon neutral city in 2025, we are right now developing our strategic cooperation with both the private sector and utility companies, thereby creating public / private partnerships.

As the City of Copenhagen has no direct influence on the energy production companies, these partnerships are essential for us to reach our goals.

But the short term goal of reducing our CO2-emissions by 20% by 2015 is already a daunting task. The majority of these reductions will come from converting from coal to biomass in our power plants, and from increasing the amount of wind power in the production.

The City of Copenhagen is planning to build 14 new wind turbines. Windmills are already part of the Danish landscape, but this time we will challenge ourselves and establish them both outside and within the city limits.

It is essential to us that the Copenhageners take part in this project, and therefore they will have the opportunity to buy shares. This will create joint ownership for the climate change challenges and will contribute to increase the support for the wind turbines – which are built relatively close to people’s homes or work places.

This is not the only way we engage the Copenhageners in the climate and environmental work. In Copenhagen we are actively supporting local Agenda 21 offices, which manage and initiate a majority of our local citizen-focused activities. We work to create the best possible framework for locally anchored environmental projects.

Copenhagen has another aim which also concerns the Copenhageners – an aim to become the world’s best city for cyclists. Today 37% of Copenhageners ride a bike to work or place of education. Our goal is for this number to be 50% by 2015.

We will develop Copenhagen to be a city where the bike is the rational choice of transportation. We do this by increasing our already very developed network of bicycle paths, and by making it safer to ride the bike. In addition, by adjusting the traffic lights to the speed of bicyclists we make it faster to ride the bike in the city, in so-called green waves for cyclists through the major streets of the city.

To conclude this intervention I will sum up a few lessons that Copenhagen has gained on our way to becoming a green economy.

First and foremost, to reach ambitious goals, it is essential that a city sets up ambitious, but still realistic and reachable targets. In my opinion these targets must be rooted in the city council.

When the targets have been adopted – then it is crucial to develop strategic plans that prescribe how to reach these targets. In this process it is important to make sure - that for instance climate and environmental measures as the ones we are planning at the moment - is incorporated in ALL relevant policies and initiatives. If a city succeed in creating an integrated approach, where the

strategy is a natural part of future urban initiatives, then the development is going in the right direction.

Through our strategic plans on district heating, our bicycle policies and our promotion of environmental initiatives to the Copenhageners and the private companies in our city - Copenhagen has experienced both economic growth, and environmental friendly development. The point is – you can have both.

To sum up – our aim in Copenhagen is not only to reduce our CO2-emissions and only to focus on energy.

Our overall goal is to develop a City which is liveable and used actively by the Copenhageners. It will be a city where the development is focused on people's health and on sustainable development. Then we are on our way towards a green economy.

Thank you for your time.