

ACTION PLAN

ACTION PLAN FOR METHODOLOGICAL AND SYSTEMATIC
FRAMEWORK FOR THE VIKEN CLIMATE NETWORK

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INTRODUCTION

Edge cities are an integral part of the existing metropolitan fabric, and the development of smaller cities within metropolitan areas play a crucial role in the transition towards a low carbon economy. It is a huge potential for reducing the greenhouse gas emission in the metropolitan regions and we believe that by addressing this issue with the perspective of both the region and the edge city, we might be able to support relevant authorities, stakeholders and other actors in the process of creating smart, green and economic solutions.

The overall objective of the SmartEdge-project (Sustainable Metropolitan Areas and the Role of The Edge City) is to improve low carbon economy policies in edge cities and their metropolitan regions. To achieve this, the eight partners from the metropolitan areas of Akershus (now a part of Viken County), Barcelona, Brandenburg, Ilfov, Krakow, Milano and Stockholm, and the Romanian Ministry of Environment have exchanged experience in 5 thematic workshops, where we identified good practices, exchanged experience and facilitated learning between the partner regions and our stakeholders. For each workshop the partners have issued an inventory, described a good and bad practice and at the workshop we have been able to learn from the partners and seen the results in the organized study visit, where practical experience has been presented and discussed on site.

The five themes we have addressed in the SmartEdge project are:

- Multi-level governance
- Participation in urban and climate and energy planning,
- Business development based on energy production,
- Energy efficiency and energy systems in the built environment
- Energy efficiency and energy systems in the transport sector

We have on one side identified innovative tools and measures for urban and energy planning in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in transport and buildings, and on the other side institutional or structural barriers that needs to be addressed in order to comply with the overall goal. We have explored the potential for local renewable energy production, reduction of emissions from transport and buildings through renewable energy and energy systems.

SmartEdge have been an important arena to challenge our views on what measures to implement when working with low carbon policies, and we have used the arena to allow our local actors and partners to be exposed to other ways of seeing and solving climate policy challenges.

The SmartEdge-project have shown that the challenges in our partner regions are overlapping and, in some cases, the same, but each partner region might have their own take on how to address the challenges. The project outputs such as the selected good practice descriptions and regional stakeholder meetings contributes to the Interreg Europe Program by aiding national, regional and local authorities in improving low carbon economy policies. At a metropolitan level the partners have used the experience gained through SmartEdge to set own activities and goals that are presented as an action plan.

The background policy document for Viken is [the regional plan for Climate and Energy in Akershus](#). The Regional Plan for Climate and Energy aims to develop policies for common climate targets and actions that can be implemented. Urban sprawl and increase in GHG emissions are challenges that need to be addressed in order to develop the six appointed edge towns into regional independent cities with good urban quality. Thus, the plan is closely linked to the polycentric strategy (one core and 6 edge cities) described in the "Joint Regional Plan for Land Use and Transportation in Oslo and Akershus". This plan sets the foundation for reducing the need for cars and transitioning to a mobility pattern based on walking, cycling and public transport. The increasing population and the urban growth have led to a transition towards these edge cities, and the Regional Plan for Climate and Energy will contribute to develop these towns into good and climate-friendly living areas by reducing GHG emissions and facilitating sustainable growth for a low carbon economy. In order for the county to be a leading sustainable region, it is imperative to find common strategies and policies.

The lion's share of the direct greenhouse gas emissions in Akershus are related to the transport and building sector. Thus, our regional plan has identified measures that will contribute in reducing the greenhouse emissions by 55% within the end of 2030. The new climate target for Viken County Council to be adopted in December 2020 is suggested to be 80 % reduction by 2030, thus even more ambitious. To significantly reduce GHG emissions, all levels of government need good practices for collaboration, involvement and implementation of strategies and measures. As identified in WS 1 one of the big challenges is that the regional plan is not a juridical binding plan. The regulatory institution for land use, climate and energy measures is in the municipality. This reality makes it relevant to explore how we, as a County Council, can cooperate with the other actors and specifically municipalities in complying climate goals on a county level.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Project: SmartEdge
 Partner organisation: Viken County Council
 Country: NORWAY
 NUTS2 region: Oslo og Akershus
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POLICY CONTEXT

The Action Plan aims to impact: Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
 European Territorial Cooperation programme
 Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: [Regional Plan for Climate and Energy](#)

DETAILS OF THE ACTIONS ENVISAGED

BACKGROUND OF VIKEN COUNTY COUNCIL AND HOW REGIONAL REFORM INFLUENCE THE SMARTEDGE-PROJECT

Viken County Council was established 01.01.2020 and consists of the former County Councils Akershus, Buskerud and Østfold, as well as some new surrounding municipalities. As a result of the regional reform Viken County Council have had an assessment of the policy instruments and as of 2021 all the old regional plans are valid until new common regional plans are adopted. That means that the climate targets and framework in the “Climate and energy plan for Akershus” is still valid until a new regional plan for climate and energy is adopted in Viken. The measures in the “Climate and energy plan for Akershus”, however, is not valid anymore. The measures for climate and energy in Viken is instead anchored in the chapter in the Climate Budget for the overall economy plan for Viken. The measures are based on the framework of the regional plans for climate and energy in Akershus and Østfold. In practice this means that we are suggesting improving measures in the Viken Climate Budget that derives from the old Climate and energy plan for Akershus.

The Action Plan is a framework to improve Viken County Councils work with reducing climate emissions, both in our own organization and in the county. One of the tasks Viken County Council have set to improve is the cooperation and coordination of the most common climate measures across the 51 municipalities in Viken. The tool to make this happening is through the initiative called “Climate Viken Network” (Klima Viken). This initiative was established in the transition from the old county structure to the establishment of Viken County Council. Viken Climate Network has since the establishment in early 2020 summoned the old regional climate networks from the former regional structure (Akershus, Buskerud, Østfold) and used time to organize and recruit municipalities that are not currently participating in the old regional climate networks.

The Action Plan developed is focusing on steps to be made in developing a framework for working with climate and energy issues in a multi-level context; from regional and municipal networks – to making awareness and involving citizens to make carbon friendly decisions. To improve the Viken Climate Network we will facilitate a process and propose actions (according to the Action Plan) parallel with the establishment of the Viken Climate Network. The role of the region and what the role of the municipality will be discussed.

An important role of this Action Plan is to structure a process to further develop the Viken Climate network-initiative, by introducing benchmark methods, measures, and framework for multi-level-government cooperation. The suggested actions and methodology are derived from the experiences shared in the SmartEdge-project.

OUR ACTION PLAN IS BASED ON THE VIKEN CLIMATE NETWORK (KLIMA VIKEN)

Background: In the end of 2019 Viken County Council started a discussion with the municipalities on how to work climate and energy issues. One need was identified as an initiative for energy and climate work. Viken Climate network became a result of this during 2020 and is still in development.

The network shall be a partnership with all the municipalities in Viken with a purpose to strengthen the basis for achieving adopted climate goals. Viken Climate network will be a tool for planning and implementing measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption. There will be collaboration on projects and measures that are compatible with the municipalities' climate and energy plans, as well as other plans. Viken Climate network will not be a substitute for municipal climate and energy work, but a strengthening and resource for better goal achievement.

The Viken climate network has been presented as a tool for the municipalities in two rounds. At a climate seminar for the municipalities in September 2019, and at the regional climate conference October 2020. At the first seminar, input was given on what is important for establishing a climate network. In October, the municipalities were presented with a proposition explaining a model for the Viken climate network: being a regional network consisting of sub-regional climate networks. The municipalities that participated gave input to this model and supported it. But many of the municipalities did not participate in the seminars and there is a need for further anchoring in the municipalities and in the existing sub-regional climate networks before Klima Viken is established.

Viken Climate network (Klima Viken) is proposed as an initiative – or a tool – Viken County council will establish in 2021, to reach the climate and energy goals in the region. We want to use the opportunity the SmartEdge project has given us to create an Action Plan that will improve the rig of the Viken climate network. By enriching it with input from the experiences learned from Brandenburg and Milano we will make it feasible to finance the network and propose a methodological and systematic framework in the first phase of the initiative.

The goal of the Viken climate network is to improve the cooperation and coordinate between municipalities and the county on common climate measures. The network will consist of local and sub-regional climate networks that already existed prior to the establishment of Viken – and secure the participation of several municipalities by establishing new sub-regional climate networks. By now, not all the municipalities participates in a sub-regional climate network. It is desirable that all municipalities participate in the networks, and a task the Viken climate network has, is to ensure participation from all the municipalities in the county.

Through the Viken climate network, Viken County Council will coordinate activities, projects and initiatives across the networks. The vision for the Viken climate network is:

- better utilize competence and resources in the climate work in the municipalities and work together to solve common climate challenges.,
- work for good cooperation between the municipalities and coordinate common actions and measures between the municipalities
- contribute to implement greenhouse gas reduction measures to achieve regional and local climate goals.
- work for collaboration with other relevant networks and partnerships in the county.

So far, the Viken climate network has proposed a traditional “network framework”. It has focused on thematic seminars and is proposed to be organized geographically. Cooperation between the municipalities have been done sporadically when possible in the existing sub-regional networks. The differences in the challenges the municipalities face depend on where in Viken they are located and the size of the communities (big or small municipality). For example, some municipalities have large emissions from agriculture, while others have challenges related to the transport sector.

However, to better utilize competence and resources, to coordinate common actions and measures, and to contribute to implementation of regional and local climate goals, the network needs to develop a methodological and systematic framework. So far it is proposed that the sub-regional network will focus on the following themes: climate communication, climate accounting and budgeting, climate advice in procurement. Since the Viken climate network is at a stage where they are developing its framework and methodology further, the timing is right to actively use the experiences learned in SmartEdge.

INSPIRATION FROM SMARTEDGE – INITIATIVES THAT COULD IMPROVE THE VIKEN CLIMATE NETWORK

We are inspired by two good practices from Phase one in the SmartEdge project:

- 1) The climate protection manager (an inspiration from Brandenburg)
- 2) +Community (inspiration from Innovhub and Milano).

These two practices show how to strengthen the cooperation between stakeholders, institutions and to influence both the public and institutional behaviours through involvement.

The climate protection manager in Brandenburg work to analyse and implement measures based on formalized goals to reduce direct and indirect climate gas emissions. This work is done by initiating change through local activities and by giving the public more information and document emissions at local level. *The lessons learned is related to how we as a regional actor can cooperate with local level in identifying and initiating positive initiatives locally and document the changes as we go, as an incentive to do better.* This can be further developed and become relevant for the Viken Climate Network.

The most concrete inspiration is *the systematic approach* in the Climate Protection manager in *organizing financial aid for actions at local level, organize work with partners, identify and give council for middle ways of economic and environmental needs – together with fulfilling the aims of a regional framework.*

The climate protection manager in Brandenburg work for the municipality (funded by the region) with the responsibility of coordinate, structure and realize different actions that follows the energy plan. *We are inspired by the way this role ensures actions from the regional plan and builds capacity at local level – and further to the local community.* As we see it, a manager like this can work together with the public, establish a culture for change at local level by establishing climate culture clubs in the region and by hosting events and gatherings propose local goals (neighbourhood by neighbourhood) to decrease the indirect emissions in the municipality and in the region. These goals can be quantified, and actions can be decided together with its citizens.

INSPIRATION PUT INTO PRACTICE FROM BRANDENBURG - WHAT VIKEN WILL DO:

For the networks to have sufficient resources to coordinate / lead the regional cooperation and to have the funds to implement local and regional climate manager, Viken County Council and the Viken climate network will offer all existing and new climate networks co-financing.

This is an inspiration from the structure learned in Brandenburg – adopted to a Norwegian context. This means that all municipalities pay dues / membership fees to co-finance their regional network. Viken pays in the same as the municipalities do so that there is a 50/50 shared finance. The size of the membership fee / membership contribution for the municipalities is determined based on population. The amounts represent in principle two components: the basic sum equal for all and a component related to population. This ensures that the larger municipalities pay more than the smaller municipalities.

The financing model will make it easier for the municipalities to hire a coordinator or general manager for the network and it will be easier to find financing for their own climate activities in the networks and for joint activities through Viken climate network.

The +COMMUNITY is a multilevel governance framework to facilitate the development of policies and project by gathering public and private stakeholders. +COMMUNITY, a program for the administration which gathers public, private, and non-profit entities operating on sustainability, usability of environmental resources and equity in the distribution of environmental goods. *This best practice inspires us to propose to establish open arenas and discussion forums as a part of Climate Viken Network.* This action will build on the inspiration from the climate protection manager and we will propose to institutionalize an arena for change. This arena will stimulate co-creation and elevate common learning in different sectors of society.

INSPIRATION PUT INTO PRACTICE FROM +COMMUNITY - WHAT VIKEN WILL DO:

The funds in Klima Viken can be used for events of thematic gatherings, initiate activities, coordinate initiatives, climate communication, communication of what the network achieves.

ACTION: METHODOLOGICAL AND SYSTEMATIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE VIKEN CLIMATE NETWORK

For the time being one of the biggest problems in Norway and in Viken, regarding greenhouse gas emissions are the indirect greenhouse gas emissions. To address these emissions there is a need to work more systematically on a multi-level-framework. Viken has already established the Viken Climate network and the foundation for working in a multi-level-framework. The action plan below is describing actions and initiatives to develop a methodological framework for the Viken Climate Network.

The stages of task implementation include:

STAGE I: (FROM THE ACTION PLAN APPROVAL TO THE END OF THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2021)

ACTION 1.1 OVERVIEW AND DIALOG

Viken county council will map the existing sub-regional climate (and environmental) networks that currently exist in Viken. Only innovative and active climate network are relevant and should be included in this first overview.

Further Viken will establish a dialogue with the existing sub-regional climate networks and municipalities that are not organized to discuss possible expansions of existing networks or the creation of new ones. The municipalities are introduced to the financing model proposed:

“Viken County Council and the Viken climate network will offer all existing and new climate networks co-financing. This means that all municipalities pay dues / membership fees to co-finance their regional network. Viken pays in the same as the municipalities do so that there is a 50/50 shared finance. The size of the membership fee / membership contribution for the municipalities is determined based on population. The amounts represent in principle two components: the basic sum equal for all and a component related to population. This ensures that the larger municipalities pay more than the smaller municipalities.

The financing model will make it easier for the municipalities to hire a coordinator or general manager for the network and it will be easier to find financing for their own climate activities in the networks and for joint activities through Viken climate network.

The financing of the networks shall cover both the employment of coordinators / general manager in each cooperation area as well as joint activities. Viken County Council finances the main part of the measures proposed in a climate action plan. The municipalities can invest either their own time or financial resources for the implementation of the climate action plan where relevant.” Based on that dialog it will be drafted a suggestion on how to develop the sub-regional climate networks further under the umbrella “Viken climate network”.

ACTION 1.2 THE PREPARATION OF INVENTORIES AND SURVEY

The next task will be to get an overview of all the climate and energy plans in Viken. This is the foundation for coordinating the climate initiatives and to get a synopsis of the climate and energy measures planned in the municipalities, and in the county as a whole.

Secondly develop a survey for the municipalities to carry out, to understand how the municipalities work with climate communication and climate accounting and budgeting.

We will use [the energy dashboard](#) (an interactive tool that presents greenhouse gas emissions for counties and municipalities in Norway) to gather basic information and get an overview of the energy consumption in the county in order to get a profile of the municipality’s energy consumption.

These initial tasks will be the groundwork for collecting information from the municipalities.

Develop the surveys and collect the data from the municipality:

- Facility survey (map existing channels, routines, relevant partners)
- Data aggregation.
- Make a synthesis of the local climate and energy goals.

STAGE II: (AFTER STAGE I, IN THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2021)

ACTION 2.1 ESTABLISHING THE SUB-REGIONAL CLIMATE NETWORKS IN VIKEN.

The Viken climate network will consist of a sub-regional network for all the municipalities. The basis of this action is to secure the establishment and participation in sub-regional climate networks. Based on the financial model explained above - the Viken Climate network will secure participation in the sub-regional climate networks - either by proposing the municipality to hire a coordinator or elect a representative to the working group for Klima Viken. As indicated above – “Viken County Council and the Viken climate network will offer all existing and new sub-regional climate networks co-financing”.

For the networks that choose to hire a coordinator – they will be in dialog with Viken County Council. We think there are at least two methods to associate a climate manager:

a: Hiring the climate manager(s) at county council level: This is corresponding with the Brandenburg model of the climate protection manager. When hiring at county level the resource can contribute and focus on the tasks related to climate goals and avoid that the coordinator is assigned to other municipal tasks or that there is a tug-of-war between the municipalities over where the employee should sit.

b: Hiring the climate manager in the municipalities or sub-regional climate network: The position can be placed in the relevant sector in the municipality or can have tasks in several sectors in the municipalities.

The municipalities and the sub-regional climate network will decide which solution is chosen.

ACTION 2.2 HOST A SERIES OF WEBINARS AND WORK WITH THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEYS.

Invite administrative and political leadership to a seminar on cooperation on climate work. It will be important to point out that the Viken climate network is a tool for the municipality to achieve climate goals. It is also important to point out that this is concrete work and not just ambitions. The municipalities allocate money to implement measures that contribute to action against goals.

Based on the dialog with the municipalities – a model for The Viken Climate network is presented to the County Council in Viken.

ACTION 2.3 FORMALLY ESTABLISH THE VIKEN CLIMATE NETWORK UMBRELLA

The Viken climate network is established as an umbrella organization and the coordinator starts the work of establishing cooperation in the regions.

Since most of the climate networks in Viken are organized geographically, The Viken climate network will focus on thematic seminars and cooperation between the municipalities across the regional climate networks. To better understand the synthesis of the climate and energy work in the region it is crucial to involve the municipalities and other stakeholders responsible for implementation to discuss the goals in light of the Energy Dashboard.

- Use the webinars to get feedback from relevant actors/stakeholders and engage the participants regarding the results of the survey and potential measures to reduce the indirect greenhouse gas emission. Identify the measures on different levels (what can the local, regional or national government address? What can the public address?).
- Define the role for the participants in the Viken Climate Network – Will the foundation work in order to propose climate protection manager in the region and/or at local level?
- Discuss whether and how the financial scheme to support the Climate protection manager can be further developed. Can the development of the Climate protection manager be done by other means and financial framework?

Follow up with a workshop to discuss the processes of coordinating the local goals and try to aggregate some of the local goals and set sub-regional or regional goals for implementation.

STAGE III: (UNTIL THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2022)

ACTION 3.1 ESTABLISHING A PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING AND DEFINING SUB-REGIONAL AND REGIONAL GOALS/ ACTIONS.

- Propose principles of how the climate protecting manager(s) can cooperate with municipalities and local community? Establish cooperation-agreements and activities to set focus, information and training.
- Based on the synthesis and mapping in the earlier Phase identify and propose new measures to quantify indirect emissions (at regional level, municipal level, neighbourhood level) and initiate a process to update measures to a new regional policy document.
- Initiate a process to develop the regional financialization scheme for it to support the implementation updated climate and energy goals. The organization of the financial aid for actions on local level will be crucial for the achievement. structure that could
- Establish an open arena and discussion forums as a part of Climate Viken network. This arena will stimulate co-creation and elevate common learning in different sectors of society.

- Built a web page that gets relevant data to publish online. It needs to be automated (like the one in Barcelona) and directly linked with the source. The web page needs a manager for day-to-day tasks. Data that gets published are only aggregated data on neighbourhood level and respect privacy and shows indicators of indirect emissions and direct emissions.

STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS INVOLVED

- o Viken County Council – responsible,
- o Municipalities – stakeholders and partners (they are the key partner enabling the climate protection manager to engage the public,
- o Business – stakeholders (partners in the project, provide data and set goals for their own business to reduce indirect emissions),
- o Environmental organizations (NGOs) – partners,
- o Stakeholders and experts (key partners to guide the framework and has experience with information campaigns. neighbourhood councils (velforeninger) – key target group and partner in the project.

TIMEFRAME

The timeframe for the activity is connected to the preparation of the regional planning period: first step is to propose changes into the framework of the Viken climate network and the actions above suggests a process of 1-2 years to implement steps and anchor the proposed actions.

The preparation process will follow a process of developing the Viken climate network further. As stated earlier it's been organized seminars (sept. 2019 and oct. 2020) regarding the content of the network and during the input sessions municipalities and other actors gave their input on how this network could be organized further. The actions above will be introduced as measures and suggestions for the Climate Viken network framework that will be created and developed during winter/spring 2021).

COSTS

Cost of the actions are related in following up the measures proposed to improve the Viken Climate network. This includes involving staff, consultants and organizing meetings for proposing the measures and concepts for the municipalities and other actors.

- One adviser from the department of climate and energy in the County Council for the main tasks in the project. Estimated at 50 % for one year. Staff Cost: 300 000 NOK = 30 000 EUR
- One adviser from department of planning in County Council for the coordination tasks in the project. Estimated at 25% for one year. Staff Cost: 150 000 NOK = 15 000 EUR

Total Staff Costs estimated each year: 45 000 EUR

FUNDING SOURCES:

Funded by the County Council through the environmental fund or through the budget.