

Mistra Urban Futures

Board Meeting No. 11

April 14-15, 2014

Chalmers University of Technology, Göteborg

Participants:

Thomas Rosswall (Chair)
Thomas Elmqvist
Colin Fudge
Klas Groth
Katarina Pelin
Hans Ristner

Ex officio:

Katarina Gårdfeldt, Gothenburg Consortium
Karl-Gunnar Olsson, Chalmers
Jessica Algehed, Acting Director

Notice of absence:

Elisabeth Deakin
Roberto Sanchez Rodriguez
Johan Edman, ex officio Mistra

Invited participants:

Susanne Björklund, Secretariat
Stig Egnell, Secretariat
Ulrica Gustafsson, Secretariat
Maria Hallin, Secretariat
Ann-Louise Hohlfält, Secretariat
Jenny Sjödin, Secretariat
Cecilia Örnroth, Secretariat

1. **Opening of the meeting**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. He noted that Elisabeth Deakin, Roberto Sanchez Rodriguez and Johan Edman (ex officio) were unfortunately unable to attend.

2. **Approval of the agenda**

The Chair invited the members to review the agenda and suggest any additional issues that might be discussed under #16, Any other business.

Decision:

The agenda was adopted with no additions to #16.

3. Self-introductions

The chair asked each Board member and the Secretariat to introduce themselves briefly. A short presentation of each Board member is available at:

<http://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/about-us/board-directors>

The Secretariat consists of:

Jessica Algehed, Acting Director

Susanne Björklund, Head of Communication

Stig Egnell, International Coordinator

Ulrica Gustafsson, Event Manager and Coordinator Gothenburg Platform

Ann-Louise Hohlfält, Director Gothenburg Platform

Jenny Sjödin, Communications Officer

Maria Hallin, Financial Officer

Cecilia Örnroth, Head of Administration

4. An introduction to Mistra Urban Futures

The Acting Director gave a brief presentation of the Centre, the main achievements in 2013 and key focus of 2014. The Annual Report had to be submitted to Mistra prior to the Board meeting and was approved by the Chair. The Centre Operational Plan 2014-2015 was developed by the previous Board and approved by Mistra in December 2013. Since this is an approved plan, the Chair and Acting Director suggested that this item is for information only. A detailed Centre Operational Plan for 2015 needs to be developed and submitted to Mistra at December 1st 2014, as the plan for 2014-2015 only briefly covers 2015.

Decisions:

To note that the Annual Report 2013 has been approved by the Chair and submitted to Mistra; to note that the Centre Operational Plan 2014, as developed by the previous Board, has been approved by Mistra;

to discuss the Centre Operational Plan 2015 at its meeting in September; and

to request the secretariat to produce a list of ongoing projects, including time table, funding and expected outputs for the next Board meeting.

5. Mid-term evaluation

The initial funding from Mistra was for a start-up phase for two years (2010-2011), after which a Start-up Review was carried out. The findings in the review were taken in to account in developing the Strategic Plan 2012-2015.

Mistra Urban Futures will be mid-term evaluated in 2015 by Mistra in consultation with Sida. Based on a successful evaluation, Mistra may decide to fund Mistra Urban Futures for a final phase 2016-2019. Mistra has provided the following timetable for the process:

2014	June	Criteria for evaluation decided by Mistra after consultation Sida and Chalmers
	October	Evaluation panel appointed
2015	January	Evaluation background material available (publications etc)
	February	Progress report and Strategic Plan delivered to Mistra
	April	Evaluation meeting, partly in Gothenburg
	June	Mistra's board decides about next phase
	Fall	Revision of Strategic Plan and negotiation of new agreement
2016	January	Start possible final phase with Mistra funding

Mistra has asked the Centre to give feed-back on the criteria used for the mid-term evaluation of Stockholm Resilience Centre and whether these also would be applicable for the mid-evaluation of Mistra Urban Futures. In general the four headings are appropriate:

1. Centre performance
2. Scientific excellence
3. Organisation, management and leadership, and
4. Bridging science, policy and practice

Under 1 it is important to consider the LIP structure and the importance of the network approach resulting in both site specific research findings as well as collaborative more generic results.

4 should come as 2, since this is the point of departure for a transdisciplinary research approach. The Mistra Urban Futures idea builds upon a strong belief that its research needs to be arranged differently than traditional research. Co-production and cross disciplinarity, as well as global collaboration, are key approaches within Mistra Urban Futures, putting a high demand on the involved researchers and practitioners. They need to be strong within their main fields of expertise, but also open to discuss and learn from other scientific disciplines and cultures different than their own. There is also a special need for being skilled in collaborating with experienced based experts in the public and private sectors.

Under new 4, it should be realized that Building a completely new centre with the complexity of Mistra Urban Futures requires time and resources. The evaluation should therefore have a strong focus on assessing the institutional build-up and that an effective adaptive management approach has been established.

Mistra has also asked the Centre to propose members of the evaluation panel. It is important that we propose both names of excellent scientists with experience from working on urban issues in a transdisciplinary environment as well as practioners. The Board was invited to select names for submission to Mistra for their consideration.

The suggested feedback to Mistra was discussed and the Board recommended to:

- change the wording on 2. "Scientific excellence" to "Excellence in knowledge generation"
- change the wording on 4. "Bridging science, policy and practice" to "Integrate science policy and practice"
- change the order of 2 and 4.

Decisions:

To approve in principle the suggested feedback to Mistra on evaluation criteria and to request the Acting Director to circulate the revised order and wording on the four bullets plus explanatory text to the Board for approval by April 30th;

to ask members of the Board to send suggestions of additional names to Cecilia with brief cv's by April 30th; and

to give the Chairman and Acting Director the mandate to finalise the list of proposed names for the evaluation panel and send to Mistra.

6. Progress Report 2010-2014

As part of the preparations for the 2015 mid-term evaluation, the progress of Mistra Urban Futures will be summarized in a Progress Report. The report shall cover the period 2010-2014 and will be sent to Mistra in February 2015.

The Progress Report will cover the institutional buildup of the Centre, the development of transdisciplinary working methods, the main scientific outputs and findings, what impact the Centre has had on urban development in the participating cities, what efforts that have been made to disseminate the results to a wider audience and how different funding has been allocated. Furthermore, the report will summarize the most important lessons learned so far.

The writing of the Progress Report will be a joint effort led by the secretariat. An editor will be hired to ensure a consistent message and language in the report. Each local platform (LIP) will be responsible for describing their own story in collaboration with the editor and staff from the secretariat, as well as for collecting data and identifying local success stories.

In March an international LIP-Directors meeting involving Cape Town, Gothenburg, Greater Manchester and Kisumu was arranged to discuss the Progress Report and the Strategic Plan. A follow up face-to-face LIP-Directors meeting will be arranged in August. In addition the Progress Report will be continuously discussed at the monthly LIP-Director telephone conferences and members from the secretariat will also meet individually with all LIPs in the period April-June 2014 to discuss their specific issues regarding the progress report. These meetings will both be physical meetings and video meetings.

Decisions:

To approve the proposed outline of the Progress Report 2010-2014;

to approve the work plan for its preparation;and

to request a bibliometric study to be made based on the list of publications including a network analysis of participating institutions.

7. Vision and mission statements 2016-2019

The vision and mission for the Centre will be key pillars in the Strategic Plan 2016-2019. They guide the content of the plan and we therefore need to revise the vision and mission as a starting point when writing the new plan for 2016-2019. According to the strategic plan for 2012-2015 the vision and mission for Mistra Urban Futures are:

Vision - The vision of Mistra–Urban Futures is to increase capacities to transform current, unsustainable urban development pathways to more sustainable urban futures in the global South and North. This vision will be met by an internationally leading research and knowledge center which produces cutting edge practice and research.

Mission - The mission of Mistra–Urban Futures for the years 2012-2015 is to increase the capacity among individuals and institutions to deliver new knowledge, approaches, tools, and arenas needed to provide fair, green, and dense urban environments. By this we mean cities that are just and prosperous, green and healthy, and livable and effective.

These statements need to be sharpened.

Decisions:

To adopt the following Vision and Mission, as a basis for the development of the Strategic Plan 2016-2019 and to use it already now in any presentation of Mistra Urban Futures; and to note that the wording may change as the Strategic Plan is being developed.

Vision: A world with sustainable urbanization where cities are fair, green and dense.

Mission: Through co-production at local to global levels, knowledge is generated and used to enable sustainable urban futures.

8. Strategic Plan 2016-2019

Besides the Progress Report, a Strategic Plan for the period 2016-2019 will be prepared as input to the evaluation in 2015. The Strategic Plan will describe the vision and mission (Agenda Item 7), overarching research questions, a global research programme, how to expand the partnership to include more cities and research institutes and how to position the Centre on the international policy arena. The plan will also include a description of how to govern and organize the Centre, as well as how to prepare the Centre for a continued development after 2019.

The Strategic Plan will be developed in close collaboration with partners. Key activities include:

- Revise the vision and mission of the Centre
- Define a few overarching research questions and develop a research programme for 2016-2019 (incl local and global research activities that are fully or partly funded by Mistra Urban Futures)
- Identify and possibly invite new partners to join the Centre. This includes transforming the Gothenburg platform into a national platform and expanding the global team of cities/research institutes involved.
- Describe how to organize and govern the Centre during 2016-2019
- Describe how to further develop the QME system
- Update the communication strategy
- Develop a fund raising strategy

Decisions:

To approve the proposed outline of the Strategic Plan 2016-2019; and to approve the work plan for its preparation.

9. Mapping potential international partnerships 2016-2019

One of the key pillars of Mistra Urban Future is the global network of cities jointly producing knowledge and influencing local and global urban policies. Today the active partner cities/universities of the Centre are situated in Africa and Europe. In order to have a convincing message and strong voice the Centre would benefit from a larger and more global partnership during 2016-2019. New partners should share the vision and mission of Mistra Urban Futures, be excellent from a scientific perspective and include a local city-academia partnership. They should also be spread globally, i.e to expand the partnership with cities from North and South America and Asia would be important. Before inviting new partners, criteria for the selection need to be identified.

During 2016-2019 interaction with relevant global policy arenas will be increased , i.e. spreading the main findings from Mistra Urban Futures to a wider audience. The Centre therefore also needs to map relevant policy processes and work out a strategy on how to approach these processes. The Centre should also consider how it relates to other, international research programmes focusing on urban issues (e.g., Future Earth, see following Agenda Item). It is also important to consider possible relationships that join cities in searching for sustainable futures (e.g., ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability).

Board members have networks involving potential partners and a good overview of which global processes that Mistra Urban Futures should be connected to. The Acting Director wishes to involve the board together with the LIPs in the mapping process.

Decisions:

To request the Acting Director to present a stakeholder map and proposed selection criteria for partners for approval at the next Board meeting. The Board offers to assist the Acting Director in doing this, using their networks.

10. Urban initiative within Future Earth

The research community engaged in global environmental change research is now reorganizing into a new platform "Future Earth" as part of the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Social Science Council (ISSC) in collaboration with UNESCO, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations University (UNU) plus a number of funding agencies under the umbrella of the Belmont Forum. The aim is to create a new environment for development of more interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research for sustainable development.

An important pillar is co-production of knowledge. An urban platform within Future Earth is being formed based on initiatives within Diversitas, the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP) and the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), ICSU programmes that will close down when Future Earth takes off. The World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) will also collaborate. A discussion was initiated with the Board on how Mistra Urban Futures may participate in this urban initiative.

Decision: To ask Thomas Elmqvist to investigate how Mistra Urban Futures may best participate and contribute to the urban initiative within Future Earth; and to report back to the Board at its next meeting.

11. Financial report 2013

The original decision from Mistra was to fund the Centre with 88 MSEK during the years 2012-2015. In February 2012, Mistra decided to reduce the funding to 64 MSEK as Centre activities had not taken off at expected pace. At that point in time, a mobilization had been made in terms of project planning in Sweden and at the LIPs, based on the initial 88 MSEK funding. When the funding was cut to 64 MSEK, Centre management decided to still continue with several activities in order not to create bad will and jeopardize relationships. This, along with poor routines for financial follow-up, led to an accumulated deficit in December 2012 of 14 627 KSEK.

The financial result for 2013 shows a surplus of 9 803 KSEK. With the accumulated deficit at the beginning of 2013 of 14 627 KSEK a deficit of 4 824 KSEK remains at the end of 2013. The surplus was consciously generated, partly through tight cost control throughout the organization and by increase of external funding.

Note that when Mistra approved the Centre Operational Plan 2013, 11 MSEK of the earlier reduced funding was returned, thus resulting in a total funding of 75 MSEK compared to the original 88.

Decisions:

To note the financial report for 2013; and
to request a clarification on the way decisions are made regarding allocations of funds for approval at the next Board meeting.

12. Revised budget 2014 and overview budget 2013-2015

The changes in the Revised budget 2014, compared to the approved budget included in the Centre Operational Plan (COP) 2014, comprise mainly of:

- Increased staff cost at the Secretariat (called HQ in the COP and in the budget), due to the coming appointment of a new Director as well as increased costs for the Board
- Decreased external funding at GOLIP (Gothenburg), as the definition of which projects to include financially has been clarified since the previous budget version was made. The definition of what to count with regards to external projects has been decided to be the full amount for the external projects that we have been part of initiating and the Mistra Urban Futures part only for other external projects.
- Some funds previously in "Reserve for new projects and collaborations" have been transferred in to project activities at GOLIP (Gothenburg)
- Increased funding to the project Cities as Value Networks (CAVN) in GOLIP
- Funds carried over from 2013 at GOLIP and GMLIP (Greater Manchester) due to delays in some projects (in total 1,5 MSEK)
- Postponing of the International Conference to 2016

The overview budget for 2013-2015 shows the actual or planned distribution of Mistra, Gothenburg Consortium and Sida funds only – local co-funding, external funds and in-kind is not shown. Approximately 2400 KSEK remains to be allocated for 2014-2015 (strategic reserve).

The Acting Director proposed to use approximately 300 KSEK from the strategic reserve for a pre-study in collaboration with Stockholm Resilience Centre to establish Mistra Urban Futures in Stockholm.

Decisions:

To approve the revised budget for 2014; and
to give the Chair the mandate to approve the allocation of approximately SEK 300 000 of the strategic reserve for a pre-study to establish Mistra Urban Futures in Stockholm, when a plan for the pre-study has been presented; and
to delegate to the Acting Director to approve new initiatives up to SEK 250 000 within the approved budget.

13. Communication strategy

In 2013 a Communication Strategy was drafted based on the objectives and directions specified in the Strategic Plan for 2012-2015.

The strategy covers communication objectives, the approach and key external target groups as well as preferred communication channels. The strategy points out the main objective to be

the delivery of communication activities supporting the overall aim to become a world-leading and well-known research Centre within sustainable urban development and assist in increasing the visibility of the Centre, by ensuring a consistent flow of messages. This should be done by spreading honest and easy to grasp communication mainly through the website, meetings and seminars, the external newsletter, Annual Report and through publications.

Since the Communication Strategy was drafted, the Centre has evolved. Some of the changes have already been implemented, while others are still to be decided upon. All these discussions and changes need to be reflected in the Communication Strategy, why there is a requirement of an updated version.

With a strong coming focus on dissemination of research results there is a need to go through the communication channels we currently use; to make sure these are the best and/or add potential new channels. There is also a need for establishing a clear, thought through story of Mistra Urban Futures, to review the target groups and elaborate on the key messages.

Decision:

To request that a revised Communication Strategy, based on the Board discussion, is presented at the next Board meeting for approval.

14. Appointment of new Director

Lars Reuterswärd resigned as Director of Mistra Urban Futures at the end of 2013 and Jessica Algehed was appointed Acting Director from 1 January. Meanwhile, Chalmers has prepared for the recruitment of a new Director. The text of the advertisement (Annex 1) was published in Swedish morning papers and on the Chalmers web on 7 April with an application deadline of 4 May. This has not been advertised internationally, but the ambition is to circulate the announcement widely through the networks of Board members as well as the LIPs.

A Search Committee has been established consisting of Karl-Gunnar Olsson (Chair), Helena Lundberg Nilsson (Chair of the Consortium in Gothenburg) and Thomas Rosswall. They will meet on 7 May to select the candidates that will be invited for interview. It is hoped that interviews have been concluded by mid-June. The Secretariat as well as LIPs will be invited to comment on the short-listed candidates. The Search Committee will recommend a candidate to the Chalmers President for final decision and the successful candidate should take up the post as soon as possible. The conditions for appointment include a permanent position at Chalmers University of Technology and an affiliation to an appropriate department at Chalmers or University of Gothenburg.

Decision:

That the Board members circulate the job announcement in their networks and note the deadline for receipt of applications.

15. Next meetings

The next Board Meetings are scheduled for June 18 (telephone), September 22-23 (physical meeting in Gothenburg), November 25 (telephone) and January 27-28, 2015 (physical meeting)

Main focus on respective meeting will be:

#12 June 18:

- Progress Report 2010-2014 - status update
- Centre Operational Plan 2015 – outline
- Strategic Plan 2016-2019 - new partnerships
- Communication Strategy

#13 September 22-23:

- Progress Report 2010-2014 – draft
- Centre Operational Plan 2015 – draft
- Strategic Plan 2016-2019 - draft overall research questions, forms for collaboration, organization, allocation of funds, goals, fund raising strategy

#14 November 25:

- Progress Report 2010-2014 - preliminary version
- Centre Operational Plan 2015 - final version
- Strategic Plan 2016-2019 - preliminary version

#15 January 27-28:

- Progress Report 2010-2014 - final version
- Strategic Plan 2016-2019 - final version
- Annual Report 2014 - preliminary version

Decisions:

To arrange the 12th Board Meeting on June 18 (telephone meeting at 2 pm - 4 pm, CET), the 13th on September 22-23 (full days, physical meeting in Gothenburg), the 14th on November 25 (telephone meeting at 2 pm - 4 pm, CET) and the 15th on January 27-28, 2015 (full days, physical meeting); and to consider inviting Board members to Gothenburg in conjunction with the evaluation in April 2015.

16. Any other business

No other business.

17. Closed meeting with Acting Director

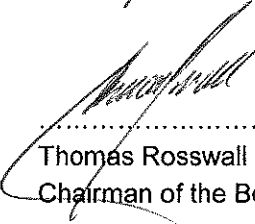
The Board met in closed session with the Acting Director to discuss the meeting, the documentation provided and possible ways of making futures meetings exciting and productive.

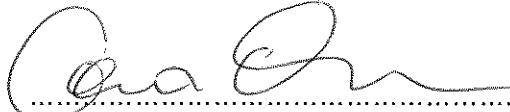
18. Closed meeting without Acting Director

The Board met in closed session.

Date: 9/5 2014

Date: 12/5 2014


.....
Thomas Rosswall
Chairman of the Board


.....
Cecilia Örnroth
Secretary of the Board