



SUSTRAN LAC - SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ACTION NETWORK FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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Abstract

SUStainable TRansport Action Network - Latin America and the Caribbean SUSTRAN LAC looks forward to sharing best practices and lessons learned about transportation issues and related topics that can contribute to a more sustainable transport in the continent. It is based on an effort of various civil society organizations and individuals who are looking forward to solving the ever-growing problem of unsustainable (motorised) transport and its adverse effects (traffic congestion, pollution, and environmental and health problems, traffic accidents and related economic deficits).

The major contribution of Sustran LAC is its potential to develop a Spanish-Portuguese speaking network of technical discussion and development of projects for the Latin American and Caribbean Region. Also, the network intends to develop specific strategies for the region that are based on the experience from other initiatives and taking into account the region's current transport situation.

Another component of the network is to develop projects for members in order to receive proper funding and improve the region's transport situation to a more sustainable one.

Various institutions such as I-ce, Locomotives/BPP, ITDP, IFRTD, GTZ-SUTP, Access International, VeloMondial, and Sustrans UK are giving technical as well as institutional support to the network. They will become a key element for the development of fruitful projects for the network and its members.

Currently, organisations from Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Chile, México, Argentina and Ecuador are part of the initiative. Once the network receives proper funding, active involvement of every member will be sought.

The marketplace session will be focused in discussing further possibilities of activities, diffusion and work for the network. Experiences from participants will be heard and discussed regarding related topics, in order to enrich the experience of Sustran in the future. It is expected to meet participants from all regions, not only LAC.

Introduction

Sustran LAC is about sustainable transport organisations, initiatives and best practices.

It is a network by and for practitioners from civil society, government, academia and private sector.

It is being created to strengthen local action and to build up national policies.

LAC cities are already participating in international programmes that are taking sustainable transport into consideration.

Sustran LAC will link existing and new sustainable transport experience in Latin America and Caribbean into a continent-wide initiative.

The strategic direction of the network derives from existing gaps that stakeholders have identified within sustainable transport-related projects and the lack of linkages between ongoing projects that international financing institutions are supporting.

SUSTRAN LAC is a network where individuals and groups with different levels of knowledge and "status" can participate in activities, discussions, and projects.



A network is a group of individuals or organizations that voluntarily relate to one another for the purpose of:

- Sharing information;
- Accomplishing tasks of common interest;
- Coordinating and facilitating regional research efforts;
- Coordinating advocacy and lobbying at the regional and international level;
- Promoting best practices (and informing about bad experiences).

Informal networks already exist without any formal structure and require no specific donor support or minimal donor support. More formal networks only come into being around specific advocacy efforts and will emerge naturally without any donor-driven effort. The effectiveness of networks that are donor-driven or first world NGO driven without a clear advocacy agenda and clear advocacy target is doubtful.

Effective advocacy and lobbying requires some individuals with an in depth understanding of the decision-making process of key institutions, linked to as large a group of constituents to the institutions being lobbied as possible. Networks can play a key role in this type of lobbying. However, they don't really need to be formalized for this to be effective. Only if the network itself has some legitimacy and name recognition does the formalization of the network really make much difference from an advocacy perspective.

Action is more important than a formal name or structure. Each individual activity contributes to the totality. In the networking process the accomplishment of tasks is the vital element. Networks are not a one-way-info process; they are based in the exchange and strengthening of its members.

The uplifting and facilitation of the colleague's autonomy, maintaining the individuality of members instead of reinforcing dependent associations, and the coherence of the network's advocacy focus, is what will determine its effectiveness.

Benefits from networks can be perceived in short and long term:

Short-term benefits are the empowerment of individuals and groups; and the positive and target oriented social relation that is established.

Long-term benefits include the exchange of information, knowledge, handy know-how, skills, experiences, materials etc. The information sharing and the coordinated work conduct to less duplication of projects and investigations, as much as the avoidance of replicating errors. The organising of information and the relation to supporters may create the opportunity for funding local groups.

The linkage of actors with similar targets may create the critical mass necessary to action and policy changing.

Background

Sustran Asia and Sustran Africa already exist and there is a chance SUSTRAN becomes a worldwide initiative, maintaining the regional focus and autonomy of each continental entity.

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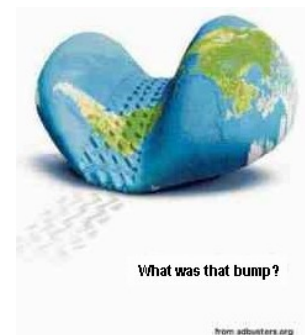
LAC World Bank-GEF Operational Program ongoing projects



Clean Air Initiative LAC is a World Bank-GEF funded project to improve air quality in LAC cities.

Many cities have proposed cycling as part of their strategy for air quality management.

The scope of the sustainable transport-related projects currently commissioned by World Bank-GEF in Latin America and Caribbean are:



Under the Operational Program 11 - Promoting Environmentally Sustainable Transport [WB.GEF.OP11.LAC]

(i) Chile - Sustainable Transport and Air Quality for Santiago: The project aims to help reduce greenhouse gases from ground transport in Santiago through a promotion of a long-term modal shift to more efficient and less polluting forms of transport. The project supports the implementation of the 2000-2010 Urban Transport Plan for Santiago;

(ii) Mexico - Climate Friendly Measures In Transport: The project assists in the execution of priority activities designed to promote continuous improvements in key air quality indicators in the Mexico City Metropolitan Area, including greenhouse gas emissions. Specific goals are: the adoption of technologies/practices resulting in cleaner industrial and service sectors; use of cleaner fuels and vehicles in the transport sector; and application of "ecological" urban land use planning that is conducive to improved air quality. The project will identify and support the adoption of instruments that would remove barriers to these goals, including regulations, norms, pricing, taxes, and institutional constraints. GEF support is targeted to barrier removal activities and to introduction of low/no GHG emitting technologies;

(iii) Peru - Lima Urban Transport: This is blended with a World Bank IBRD and IDB Loan. The proposed GEF components are: promotion of bicycle use and construction of bikeways, rationalization of public transport supply and institutional strengthening. The main objective of the project is to promote non-motorized transport and to establish an efficient, reliable and safe mass rapid transit system by implementing and operating high capacity buses in segregated bus corridors, which will improve public transport of Metropolitan Lima population, especially for the low-income population of the peri-urban poor neighbourhoods.

Under the Operational Program 07 - Low/No GHG Emitting Technologies [WB.GEF.OP 07.LAC]

(i) Brazil – Transport and Air Quality Improvement Program for São Paulo. The project will help reduce greenhouse gases from land transport in São Paulo through long term modal shift to more efficient and less polluting forms of transport. To that end, the project will support the implementation of the Integrated Urban Transport Plan for 2020 (PITU 2020) and the Master Plans for the São Paulo Metropolitan Region (SPMR) and the Municipality of São Paulo which present a vision that is consistent with the overall objectives of the GEF operational program on sustainable transport.

(ii) Colombia - Air Quality and Sustainable Transport for Bogotá and Other Cities. The proposed project is aimed at reducing greenhouse gases from ground transport in Bogotá and other Colombian cities. Resources will be used for studies and pilot interventions to: (i) Ensure an accelerated modal shift away from personal motorized vehicles to bus transport, (ii) Promote a rationalized and efficient system to move freight into and through the major urban centres participating at the project, (iii) increase the use of non-motorized transport modes such as bicycles and walking, (iv) reduce private car use through transport demand management measures, (v) reduce travel length through a coordinated land-use and transport planning; (vi) promote cleaner fuels, and operation and maintenance practices; and (vii) enhance the analytical tools available at the institutional level.

Technical and social relevance of the network



The current situation is characterised by a lack of planning together between the Transport, Environment and Health sectors and the lack of linkage and exchange between ongoing projects commissioned by International Financial Institutions. This constrains the capacity of city managers to conceive and design new programmes or initiate appropriate policy, legislative and institutional reforms in support of sustainable transport.

The many advantages of mobility and easy access to goods and services are clear. Nevertheless, governments should actively implement policies requiring those who generate transport costs to pay for them. Ideally this would be achieved by taxing transport at a rate equal to the external costs generated by the individual road user. This would give people an incentive to reduce socially wasteful journeys; the costs are internalised, it is said.

The effectiveness of preventing the adverse health effects associated with different types of transport is limited. This is partly because these interventions often have consequences beyond the adverse impacts that they are designed to reduce. For example, the legal requirement to use cycle helmets in Australia reduced the number of head injuries, but it also reduced the number of cyclists to the point that a net health loss is expected.

The consequences to the environment are often overlooked in evaluating interventions that promote health. When assessing public health promotion policies and interventions, all the health consequences should be considered; we should be more interested in over-all health gain than in reducing a particular statistic. Overcoming these challenges calls for new dynamic partnership and collaborations with governments and the non-governmental groups.

Many transportation policies fail to take adequately into account their impacts on poverty and social exclusion, neglecting the access and transportation demand of the more economically disadvantaged groups of society, who rely mostly on public transportation, walking and cycling to meet their mobility needs. There is an urgent need for preventive strategies that address the whole range of health, and environment impacts of transportation policy options, including those related to poverty and social exclusion. Although we have evidence of health impacts of traffic-related pollutants and risks, there is little knowledge about the health benefits of certain transport modes and strategies; no methods to consider these risks and benefits jointly; and no tools for taking into account the synergies and conflicts for health and environment of alternative transport policies.

The challenge of the present initiative is set by linking information updating, based in scientific evidence, to the “field working” necessity of monitoring and evaluating ongoing projects, as well as creating the milieu for technical exchange.

Benchmarking and identifying learning linkages processes of new and envisaged activities at regional and national level will contribute to positive results of the referred projects as well as to future sustainable transport initiatives in other cities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Objectives

Sustran LAC's main objectives are the following:

Create a network of information about sustainable transport organisations, initiatives and best practices related to this topic;

Develop information sharing, capacity building and policy advocacy between organisations and projects of sustainable transportation and road safety;

Promote sustainable urban transport projects, policies and practices;

Create a methodology for benchmarking, monitoring and evaluating the ongoing LAC sustainable transport-related projects;

Identify learning linkages between the ongoing LAC sustainable transport-related projects;

Propose strategies for linking ongoing LAC sustainable transport-related projects.

Methodology



Research publications and Internet based information; make contact to international financing institutions and network members to the identification of LAC cities/groups that are participating in sustainable transport initiatives such as:

BRT – Bus Rapid Transit;

NMT- Non-Motorized Transport;

TDM – Transport Demand Management; and,

LUP – integrated urban transport and Land-Use Planning;

Create continent-wide campaigns for lobbying to the promotion and initiation of sustainable transport projects and programs in LAC cities;

Organise capacity building & training courses targeted at key decision-makers and practitioners to impart essential skills in the formulation and implementation of sustainable transport practices (NMT, TDM, BRT and LUP);

Create awareness and dissemination of sustainable transport options to key LAC contacts and institutions through appropriate communication networking strategies (web-sites, mailing lists, newsletters, distribution of documents and media outreach initiatives);

Provide informal mechanism where GEF implementing/executing agencies, GEF member countries, major stakeholders groups (civil society, municipalities and private sector) can explore and strengthen analysis and debate of the central issues on the implementation of sustainable transport options;



Catalyse new cooperative partnerships and initiatives among GEF implementing/executing agencies, GEF member countries and key stakeholder groups at regional and national level;



Build up and establish regional and national level monitoring and information databases on sustainable transport in LAC;

Develop and apply a methodology to evaluate [WB.GEF.OP.LAC] projects. Methods, models and findings are expected to contribute to monitoring and evaluating on-going projects.

Development

A regional network only makes sense to be created if to strengthen local action and advocacy and to build up national policies.

Supporters should have supervisory powers, not only advisory. Other friendly and competent supporters will be sought to compose the Advisory/Supervisory Board.

Sustran LAC member's responsibility in this initial phase is supporting the idea, participating in proposed activities and reporting about local and national level ongoing or proposed activities related to sustainable mobility.

Further on, when the Secretariat is fully working, the members are organised and a "modus operandi" is established, members will form a Governing Board to elect committees and representatives.



The Governance of SUSTRAN-LAC is with the members, the LAC practitioners. Until the members take up governance, the Secretariat is accountable to the Supervisory Board.

Target beneficiaries



Populations as a whole through better air quality, collective and individual health enhancement, and social inclusion. More specifically Pedestrians; Cyclists; People with disabilities; Public Health sector; Cities and local economies.

The International Financing Institutions will benefit from the assistance and the input provided by external monitoring and evaluating process of ongoing projects and the methodology created.

Desired products

Virtual network on organisations working towards sustainable mobility; Webpage with information;

Workshops; Seminars; Project proposals; Production and distribution of printed material in each country;
A model bill for reforming laws on traffic and land use planning;
A benchmarking tool (methodology) to evaluate sustainable mobility-projects.

Basic indicators

Indicators of the success of the Sustran LAC network are: Amount of organisations and individuals actively involved in the network; Amount of projects designed and/or implemented; Amount of countries and/or cities involved in the network; Increase in network members per month/year; Recognition by GEF implementing/executing agencies, GEF member countries; Recognition by LAC cities local advocates/groups.

Indicators of success of the projects developed within the network



Modal shift towards sustainable transport;
Transport- related bills become laws;
Enhanced bicycle use, sale, parking facilities;
Increase in accessible footways;
Universal Design - Public transport systems accessible to all passengers;
Increase in numbers of readers of printed materials, radio and television audiences;
Freedom of trade for used bicycles, complete exemption of customs duties;
Reduction in CO2 levels and other contaminants related to transport sector;

Benchmarking methodology created and applied; Learning linkages recognised by GEF executing agencies and member countries; Funding made available for SUSTRAN LAC and its projects.

Disseminating Results

The predicted results are that there would be benefits for bringing LAC sustainable transport projects into a common framework for the cities and for the projects, influencing positively in the outcomes.

The activities converge to the World Bank Transport proposed Strategy, where the public and social processes are being organised to facilitate timely well-informed consultation and, thus, the possibility to create institutional and financial arrangements to the political process of transport policy formulation.

What's Next?

Clean Air Initiative LAC Conference will happen in July 2006, São Paulo, Brazil.

The conference will conclude with a Capacity Building Seminar (Technical training) on BRT, Cycling and Walking; with international inputs by I-ce, ITDP and GTZ/SUTP.

A National Bicycle Advocacy Meeting and a big Critical Mass Bicycle Riding will happen in the weekend before CAI LAC Conference São Paulo.

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