



Institute for
European
Environmental
Policy

**MID-TERM ASSESSMENT OF THE COMMUNITY
FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION TO PROMOTE
SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

Final Report

from

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with

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FINAL REPORT

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Report

This document is the final report of the Mid-Term Assessment of the Community Framework for Cooperation to promote Urban Sustainable Development. The work has been undertaken by the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) and its partners, Ecologic (based in Berlin), IEP (Prague), in close cooperation with our expert adviser, Yvonne Rydin who is Director of the Centre for Environmental Policy and Governance at the London School of Economics.

IEEP is the lead organisation and has therefore been responsible for the overall project management, report production and the majority of the work. Ecologic and IEP undertook evaluations of a number of projects and contributed to other selected aspects of the work, while Yvonne Rydin was consulted at key stages of the project.

1.2 The Cooperation Framework

The Community Framework for Cooperation to promote Urban Sustainable Development was set up by Decision 1411/2001/EC (see Annex III.A for a summary of the Decision). The instrument is generally referred to by a number of alternative names, including the Cooperation Framework, the urban legal base and the Sustainable Cities Fund, some of which reflect its origins (see Section 2.1). For the purposes of this report, we will refer to the instrument set up by Decision 1411/2001 as the Cooperation Framework.

Under the Cooperation Framework, projects and activities can be funded under one of three Parts, for which an indicative level of funding is suggested, ie:

- A. Exchanges of information (40% of total funding);
- B. Cooperation (40%); and
- C. Accompanying measures (20%).

Under Parts A and B, the Cooperation framework funds *projects* led by networks of local authorities/municipalities, whereas under Part C it funds *activities* of the sort defined in the Annex to the Decision. The Decision covers the years 2001 to 2004.

The Cooperation Framework has not been subsequently renewed. Instead, it is one of the funding streams that is to be merged into the LIFE+ funding mechanism that was proposed by the European Commission in September 2004 and is currently the subject of deliberations within the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers.

1.3 The Mid-term Assessment of the Cooperation Framework

As stated above, this document is the final report of the mid-term assessment of the Cooperation Framework. This assessment was originally scheduled to have been undertaken by March 2003, however it was delayed owing to an insufficient number of projects having been funded by that time. Instead, the mid-term assessment is being undertaken at this stage in order to contribute to:

- Improving the operation of the ongoing projects, including those funded under the 2004 call.
- Improving the Commission's management of these projects.
- The development of future European funding streams for projects promoting urban sustainable development.

As set out in the Commission's terms of reference for this project, the work had three distinct parts:

- Part 1: Assessing the nine *projects* funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework in response to the calls in 2001 to 2003.
- Part 2: Assessing the *activities* funded under Part C in 2001 to 2003.
- Part 3: Assessing the Cooperation Framework as an instrument to assist local authorities in:
 - Implementing environmental legislation at local level.
 - The sustainable development of urban areas.
 - Promoting Local Agenda 21.
 - Strengthening and improving the integration of sustainable development principles in urban areas.

The discussions of the following sections generally follow this framework.

1.4 Methodology

The methodology was presented to, and approved by, the Steering Committee¹ on 14 October 2004. The Commission's terms of reference (ToR) set out the basic framework for the methodology, including the criteria against which the mid-term assessment was to be undertaken, specific questions that needed to be answered and tools to be used. The four criteria against which the Cooperation Framework was to be assessed, were as follows:

- **Relevance** to the evolving needs and problems of local authorities.
- **Effectiveness** in achieving its objectives.
- **Efficiency** of the projects and activities.
- **Community Added Value**, which consists of:
 - *Utility* in supporting local authorities.

¹ The Steering Committee was set up by DG Environment and consisted of representatives from the Urban and financial services units from within DG Environment, as well as representatives from DG REGIO and DG Budget.

- *Viability* of the impacts of the projects and activities after funding.

The questions are replicated in Annex I.A, where they are mapped against the methodological tools that were used in the course of the assessment. These tools are discussed in the appropriate section of the methodology, as set out below.

Additionally, it is important to note at this stage that less attention was paid to Part 2 of the work – the evaluation of the activities funded under Part C of the Cooperation Framework – than the other two parts, at the suggestion of the Commission’s desk officer and the Steering Committee.

1.4.1 Setting the Evaluation Framework.

In order to assess whether projects and activities met the ‘evolving needs’ of local authorities, it was necessary to clarify this term by effectively defining the baseline. After careful consideration, it was decided that we would take the necessary baseline as the Commission’s evolving policy on urban sustainable development, in particular the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, on the assumption that this should be taking account of local authorities’ evolving needs.

In the event, this was the most pragmatic approach that we felt that we could take. The identification of the ‘real’ baseline would have required a review of the differing needs of local authorities in the different Member States and an identification of how these had changed in the course of the operation of the Framework. This would have taken a significant amount of time and was not practical within the budget and time period within which the project was to run, and would not have been an efficient use of resources. A further point worth noting is that the EU has limited competence over the measures that can contribute to local authorities’ implementation of urban sustainable development. Hence, we are assessing the relevance of the Cooperation Framework, its projects and activities to the evolving needs of local authorities in the context of what can be done at the EU level in this respect.

Taking the Commission’s policy on the urban environment as the baseline, of course, assumes that this is an adequate reflection of the needs of local authorities. Given that the Commission has been consulting stakeholders in the course of the development of the strategy, we felt that it was safe to assume, at least for the purposes of this assessment, that the evolving Community policy on the urban environment was an adequate baseline to use.

1.4.2 Desk-based Research

The desk-based research had three strands:

- ***Review of relevant policy documents***, eg relevant Commission’s policy documents (see Annex II.A), the Decision setting out the Cooperation Framework and its calls.

- **Review of ‘other’ relevant EU activities, policies and funding mechanisms** to assess the complementarity to and overlap with those of the Cooperation Framework.
- **Review of project/activity documentation.**

Desk-based research was undertaken for each part of the work. However, whereas the assessment in relation to Parts 1 and 3 was complemented with information obtained from other sources (see Section 1.4.3), the assessment in relation to Part 2 was solely based on project-related documentation. This reflects the lower priority placed on this part of the work by the Steering Committee (see above).

1.4.3 Obtaining New Information

Apart from the desk-based research described in Section 1.4.2, the assessment required the gathering of a range of new information, particularly for Parts 1 and 3 of the assessment. The first step in this process was to identify the main stakeholder groups from whom we hoped to obtain all this new information. These were identified as follows:

- Those involved in projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework, ie:
 - **Coordinators;**
 - **Project partners;** and
 - **Network members** of the networks that are leading these projects.
- **External experts** in order to obtain an objective perspective on the Cooperation Framework and its projects and activities.
- **Local authorities** not involved in any of the projects in order to obtain a more objective local authority viewpoint.

The identification of those belonging to the first category was straightforward. Experts were identified from lists of experts involved in Commission working groups and other projects and initiatives relating to the urban environment. The original intention was that ‘other local authorities’ would be identified on the basis of those not included on lists of members supplied by the networks leading the projects. In the event, the lists were not supplied by the networks (as they contacted their members directly), so these local authorities were identified via other means. One such means was contacting those local authorities that had applied to present their experience at the AALBORG +10 conference, which was one of the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework in 2003 (see Section 2.2 for more details). The advice of the Commission’s project officer and the Steering Committee was sought, throughout, as appropriate.

The new information was obtained using a number of methods (a diagrammatic summary of the methodology is given in the Figure, below):

- Basic questionnaires were distributed to:

- Project partners and network members;
 - Project coordinators; and
 - Experts.
- Fuller interviews were undertaken with:
 - Project partners and network members (as appropriate);
 - Project coordinators (as appropriate);
 - Experts; and
 - ‘Non-member’ local authorities.
- Visits to coordinators or project meetings (as appropriate).

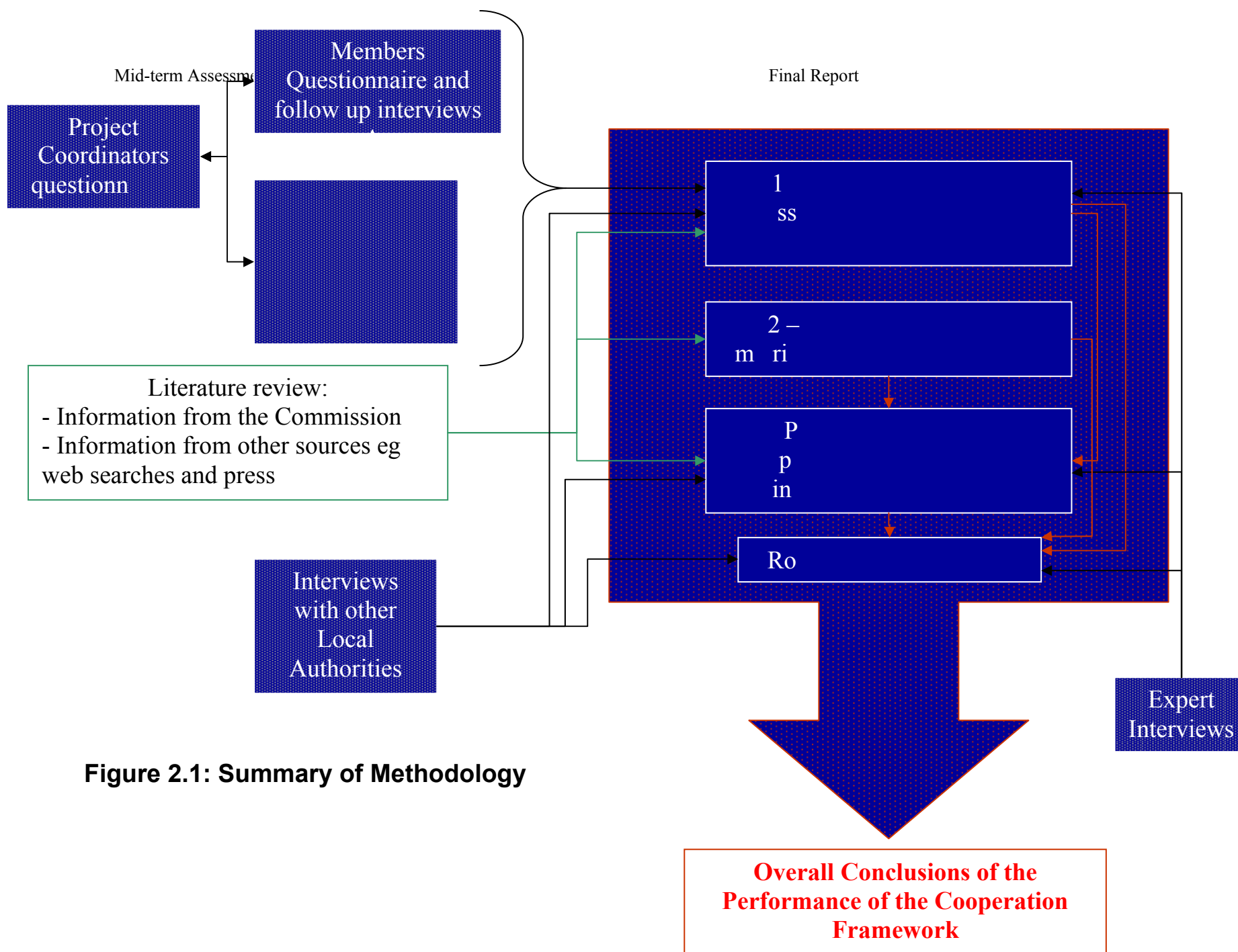


Figure 2.1: Summary of Methodology

The questionnaires and interviews were developed on the basis of the set of questions set out in the ToR (see Annex I.A). An example of the type of questions asked can be seen in Annex I.B.

1.4.4 Analysis and Presentation of Results

The analysis was based on the information obtained by the above methods. A key feature of the analysis was a fiche, which was set up for each project, into which information gathered on each of the projects funded under Parts A and B were inserted. The purpose of this was to ensure that we obtained consistent and comprehensive information about each project to facilitate the assessment.

In order to analyse the information, the relevant information was inserted into a spreadsheet, which contained a separate row for each of the projects, while the columns contained the relevant questions in the ToR that we were to address in order to assess against a particular criteria. The relevant information was then summarised into the relevant box on the spreadsheet. The analysis for Part 2, which was less extensive than that of Part 1, was based on the table that is contained in Annex IV.A. For Part 3, the analysis required the pulling together of the analysis for Parts 1 and 2, as well as an analysis of the responses to particular questions that related solely to Part 3, ie questions that were of a more general nature. In this case, a row was dedicated to each additional question, while, again, the columns contained the relevant questions from the ToR (see example in Annex I.A).

Progress on the project was reported to the Steering Committee at a number of different stages:

- In month 3, an interim report was presented to the Steering Committee, which was discussed at a meeting in month 6.
- In month 7, a draft preliminary report was sent to the Steering Committee.
- In month 9, a draft final report was sent to the Steering Committee.

At each stage, the comments received were taken on board and the reports were developed, accordingly.

1.4.5 Workshop

The final stage of the assessment was a workshop to which selected stakeholders were invited. The objective of the workshop was to explore the future funding of projects to promote urban sustainable development once the Cooperation Framework has been integrated into the LIFE+ mechanism, as well as to explore and validate the conclusions and recommendations of the mid-term assessment. These were subsequently updated as a result of the workshop. Details of the agenda of the workshop and the participants can be found in Annex I.C.

1.5 Methodological Limitations

It was more difficult than originally anticipated to obtain much of the new information needed to undertake the mid-term assessment of the Cooperation Framework. In relation to the projects themselves, it was sometimes difficult to obtain a response from the coordinator. To some extent, this was due to the fact that they are busy people who wanted to respond fully to the questionnaire and thus took time to achieve. However, we did not receive a final questionnaire from the coordinator of one of the projects (MIRIAD 21). The network members and project partners were contacted by the respective project coordinators, which added an extra link in the communication chain in terms of chasing the former. Our original intention had been to circulate the questionnaires ourselves, but the networks preferred to do this themselves. In the end, we received around 70 responses in addition to those that we had received from the coordinators. Where appropriate these responses were followed up subsequently by telephone or face-to-face interviews. It is important to note that the responses should not be taken as being necessarily fully representative. This is because the responses were voluntary, and therefore an element of self-selection was unavoidable, and that, compared to the membership of the networks, we received responses from a relatively small proportion of the actual network membership.

In relation to experts, we contacted those to whom we had been recommended to talk. However, many of these did not feel that they had an adequate knowledge of the Cooperation Framework and/or its projects. Some, who did not feel they had anything to say about the Framework itself, did offer their views on the more high profile projects (eg CAMPAIGN and AALBORG +10, see Section 2.2 for details of these). In all we spoke to around 40 people. As a result of the difficulty in identifying people who considered themselves, to be sufficiently knowledgeable to talk about the Cooperation Framework, we have not been able to obtain as many objective viewpoints as we would have liked. While the workshop was useful and we were able to explore and validate our conclusions and recommendations, the fact its participants were primarily those who benefit from the Cooperation Framework – even though a wider selection of stakeholders were invited – raises similar issues about the objectivity of the views put forward.

In what follows, therefore, we have tried to be as explicit as we can in identifying the type of source from which the information came. We have also tried to be as objective as we can and to present a fair and balanced view, while recognising the limitations of the information at our disposal.

The difficulties that we have faced raise issues about the best way of evaluating an instrument, such as the Cooperation Framework, which does not have a very high profile through being targeted at a particular type of applicant, in this case networks of local authorities. The fact that some of the projects funded by the Framework had a higher profile than the Framework itself, underlines this problem. This does not necessarily mean that the instrument is not relevant, effective, efficient or provide Community-added value – or indeed that it is – just that it was not as easy to assess such issues, as it would have been with a more widely-known mechanism.

1.6 Note on terminology

In the following report, we use the term ‘local authority’ to mean ‘the authority/authorities or municipality/municipalities in the most appropriate position to deliver urban sustainable development’. As a result of the differing practices between, and even within, EU Member States, it is not possible to define this term any more succinctly. In other words, very different types of authority might be involved depending on the differing institutional structures in the various Member States. Additionally, it is important to underline that in some instances, delivering urban sustainable development in any one urban area may require the active involvement of more than one tier of government.

It is also worth noting that most references to ‘networks’ in the report refer to the networks that are eligible for funding under the Cooperation Framework, ie established ‘networks of local authorities organised in at least four Member States’ (see Annex III.A). It is recognised that other networks could exist, eg those set up for a specific project or purpose, but these are not relevant to the Cooperation Framework. However, the subject of other networks is referred to in the context of other funding mechanisms (see Section 6.3) and the future funding of projects aimed at promoting urban sustainable development (see Sections 7.1 and 7.2).

As mentioned in Section 1.4.3, a number of different stakeholders were approached for information in the course of this project. In the remainder of the report, we have tried to be consistent in the terminology when we have referred to these. The meanings of the terms used are as follows:

- **Coordinator** or **project coordinator** – such references refer to the people who coordinated the nine projects funded under Part A and B of the Cooperation Framework in 2001 to 2003. In other words, these people worked at the coordinating network and **NOT** in a local authority.
- **Local authority network member** or **network member** – such references refer to the views of people who work at local authorities that are involved in the projects funded by the Cooperation Framework.
- **Expert** or **external experts** – such references refer to the views of external experts, ie people who have a view on the Commission’s approach to urban policy, generally, and/or the Cooperation Framework and its projects and activities, in particular. These people are, therefore, **neither** employed by a network nor by a local authority.

1.7 Structure of this report

The next chapter (Chapter 2) contains some more detailed background information on the policy context, including the origins of the Cooperation Framework and subsequent policy developments, in order to provide a context for some of the findings of the assessment. It also gives an overview of the projects and activities funded by the Cooperation Framework, as these are referred to regularly in the text that follows. The following four chapters (Chapters 3 to 6) assess in turn the

Cooperation Framework against one of the four criteria that were set out in the ToR (see Section 1.4). Each of these four chapters is divided into three sections, which address, in turn:

- The projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework (ie Part 1 of the work). In this section, the views of the correspondents, ie the project coordinators, network members and experts, on the projects in relation to the criterion being addressed by that chapter are summarised. This is followed, where appropriate, by a review of any relevant documentation.
- The activities funded under Part C of the Cooperation Framework (ie Part 2 of the work). This section reviews the activities with reference to their documentation.
- The Cooperation Framework, itself, which draws on the assessment of the projects and activities, but takes a broader view of the instrument as a whole (ie Part 3 of the work). This section starts by reviewing correspondents' views on the Cooperation Framework itself, in relation to the criterion being assessed in that chapter, which is followed, where appropriate, by a review of any other relevant documentation. This section concludes with an assessment of the Cooperation Framework, its activities and projects, against that criterion.

The review and assessment is supported, where appropriate, by references to Annexes, which contain supporting information.

Chapter 7 addresses issues relating to the funding of this type of project in the future once funding for projects led by urban sustainability networks is integrated into the LIFE+ programme. Again this chapter is split into the views of the correspondents (7.1 and 7.2), followed by the assessment of these views. Chapter 8 contains a summary of the work and findings, together with a consolidated set of conclusions drawn from the final Sections of Chapters 3 to 7, followed by a discussion of issues that have arisen in the course of the work. Chapter 9 presents the recommendations of the mid-term assessment of the Cooperation Framework.

2. Background

2.1 The Development of the Cooperation Framework

Decision 1411/2001 established the Cooperation Framework to provide financial and technical support to networks of local authorities organised in at least four Member States. The objective of the framework was to encourage the conception, exchange and implementation of good practice in relation to:

- the implementation at local level of EU environmental legislation;
- sustainable urban development; and
- local Agenda 21.

The thinking in terms of priorities in the Cooperation Framework Decision reflect aims and objectives of the broader EU policy context contemporary to the Decision and also the broader needs the Cooperation Framework was set up to meet.

2.1.1 The Policy Context

The Decision cites specific policy dossiers and resolutions, which are used to justify the legal and policy base for its priorities and the existence of such a measure. This base includes measures as wide ranging as the EU Treaty, the Fifth Environmental Action Programme, Committee of the Regions Opinions and European Parliament Resolutions. The policy documents cited reflect broader environmental and sustainable development priorities as well as the specific priorities of urban sustainable development and building partnerships and awareness among local authorities. The specific policy documents cited are outlined in Annex II.A Table II.1.

Despite the EU's relatively limited competence in relation of some urban issues, there are a number of Commission publications addressing the subject. The Commission Communication 'Towards an Urban Agenda in the European Union' (COM(1997)197) was a key policy development in terms of urban sustainable development; setting the context for the majority of later measures. This Communication sets out the framework for EU action in the area of urban sustainability. Certain actions and aims specified in the dossier fit well with the aims of the Cooperation Framework and the activities outlined under the Decision. For example the suggestion that the Commission should intensify its efforts in relation to the exchange of experiences between cities, with the objective of collecting and compiling all relevant experience in urban regeneration and sustainable urban development.

The Commission Communication on 'sustainable urban development in the European Union: a framework for action' (COM(1998)605) built on the 1997 Communication. This dossier more explicitly highlights the need for 'awareness raising and capacity building measures', in the context of good urban governance. The Communication sets out the legal basis for the Cooperation Framework. The European Parliament

subsequently welcomed this Communication's support for urban networking and cooperation.

2.1.2 The Broader Context

Networks are considered to be important tools for the implementation of EU urban objectives, due to the historic reluctance of Member States to accept European legislative measures in this area of limited EU competence. The development of an effective network, theoretically advances the implementation of policy objectives by: assisting with awareness raising; enabling the sharing of knowledge, information and best practice; resulting in common problem framing; enabling groups to find new ways to access and use resources; and enabling mutual monitoring encouraging individuals involved to improve their performance. However, these benefits only result as a consequence of a well functioning network. This requires: good communication; trust and respect between network members; that the transactions costs of being involved in the network down are kept down; and ensuring that account is taken of the different local contexts when sharing knowledge, best practice, etc.

The Commission has been funding activities undertaken by networks in relation to urban policy for many years, and did so before the Cooperation Framework Decision. However, in 1997 the Court of Auditors ruled that several budget lines being used to fund local initiatives, conferences and other policy support activities (including the Expert Group on the Urban Environment and the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign) were without a proper legal base. Funding ceased as a consequence, causing problems for the Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign and networks working on urban sustainable development such as Eurocities, CEMR and ICLEI - who had been undertaking work in this field for the Commission's urban environment unit. For this work to continue it was vital that a legal base for such activity be developed in order to allow funding. This need led to the highlighting of the importance of networking in the 1998 Commission Communication. This in turn led to the development of Decision 1411/2001 on the Cooperation Framework. It is as a result of this development process that the Cooperation Framework is often referred to as the 'legal base'.

2.2 Policy Developments since the Adoption of the Cooperation Framework

Subsequent to the adoption of Decision 1411/2001, major developments have taken place in terms of environmental policy. These, in turn, have resulted in the urban sustainable development debate moving forward. In 2002, the sixth Environmental Action Programme (6EAP) was adopted². This important measure, updated the EU's objectives in terms of the environment. More specifically one of the programme's aims was to 'encourage sustainable urban development'. Sitting within the priority of environment, health and quality of life, it was highlighted that in order to meet this urban development aim 'a thematic strategy promoting an integrated horizontal approach across Community policies and improving the quality of urban environment' should be developed. It is states that this strategy should take into

² Decision 1600/2002

account progress made in implementing the existing cooperation framework, reviewing it where necessary.

The Thematic Strategy on the urban environment is one of seven such policy dossiers currently being developed by the European Commission. The strategies are expected to lead the development of integrated environmental policies in key areas in the coming years, and are key mechanisms for the implementation of the 6EAP. In 2004 the Commission released its Communication ‘Towards a Thematic Strategy on the urban environment’³. This ideas paper is the first step towards the development of the full strategy. The development process involves extensive consultation with stakeholders; the Commission has set up working groups to develop thinking on key elements of the policy. The final strategy is intended to improve the environmental performance and quality of EU urban areas and to secure a healthy living environment for Europe’s urban citizens, reinforcing the environmental contribution to sustainable urban development.

2.3 Projects and Activities funded by the Cooperation Framework (2001-03)

In order to make the Cooperation Framework funds available, calls for proposals have been issued on a yearly basis from 2001 to 2004. These calls outline the types of projects the Commission would like to fund, including the subject matter to be covered and the methods of working. They also outline the funds available in that year. Annex III.B contains a more detailed review of the calls, the funding available and their priority themes.

In total nine projects were approved, up until the end of 2003, under Parts A and B of the framework (see Section 1.2 for details of the parts). Box 2.1 contains a short summary of the nine projects (a fuller description is given in Annex III.C). In addition various reports and support, including support for the Urban Thematic Strategy working groups, have been completed under part C (see Annex IV.A for details of these part C activities).

Box 2.1 – Summarising the projects funded under parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework

- CAMPAIGN (Year: 2001, Total Budget: €1,364,398; EU grant: €1,262,398)
Led by Eurocities with ten of the major European networks as partners. The objective was to provide support to actors and towns to implement local Agenda 21, facilitation of information exchange, networking and awareness rising. Activities included newsletters, meetings, web sites and presentations.
- RESOURCITIES (Year: 2001, Total Budget: €459,240; EU grant: €359,240)
Led by Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling. The objective was to raise awareness of local and regional authorities, and through them, of the general public, on the relations between current ways of life and the consumption of natural resources beyond the growing urban waste production. Activities included touring exhibitions, web sites, events, guidance and awards for good practice.
- PHASE (Year: 2002, Total Budget: €512,255; EU grant: €480,298)

³ COM(2004)60

Led by the World Health Organisation. The objective was to integrate health and social aspects into sustainable development in European cities and towns and to mobilise networks of healthy cities. Activities included meetings, the development of a Health Impact Assessment toolkit and resource pack.

- DISPLAY (Year: 2002, Total Budget: €438,379; EU grant: €394,541)

Led by Energie Cités. The objective was to launch and co-ordinate a Campaign directed at European cities to stimulate them to display the CO₂ emissions and energy consumption performance in public buildings. Activities included the creation of a display label of CO₂ emissions/energy consumption and to improve the information system of European municipalities so they could be used for the assessment of energy/climate policy.

- MIRIAD 21 (Year: 2002, Total Budget: €795,700; EU grant: €692,259)

Led by Association Les Eco Maires. The objective was to use sustainable development as a platform to prevent major industrial risks. Activities included web sites, awareness raising, campaigns, meetings and the development of urban management systems.

- SIPTRAM (Year: 2002, Total Budget: €602,676; EU grant: €497,134)

Led by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). The objective was to promote competitive tendering in public urban transport as a chance, rather than a threat or an obligation, to improve environmental and social standards. Activities included the production of a Good Practice Guide, creation of networks and signing of commitment documents.

- EMAS (Year: 2002, Total Budget: €590,058; EU grant: €535,768)

Led by the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC). The objective of the project was to encourage municipalities across Europe, especially in the new Member States, to use and develop EMAS. The activities included a step-by-step guide to EMAS, peer reviews by friendly visits conducted by other cities, newsletters and workshops.

- AALBORG +10 (Year: 2003, Total Budget: €1,037,274; EU grant: €450,270)

Led by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). The objective was to encourage cities and towns to start local, sustainable actions and to assess the experience gained since the Aalborg charter. The activities included the organisation of the Aalborg +10 conference and the preparation of new Aalborg +10 commitments.

- QUICKSTART (Year: 2003, Total Budget: €459,875; EU grant: €390,296)

Led by Klima-Bündnis (Climate Alliance of European Cities with Indigenous Rainforest People). The objective was to offer a methodology for local authorities to work out an immediate climate policy action programme in a very short time. Activities included the development of the QUICKSTART methodology, training programmes and the involvement of pilot cities.

3. Relevance of the Cooperation Framework

As mentioned, above, this chapter, and each of the following three chapters, assesses the Cooperation Framework against one of the four criteria – in this case relevance – set out in the terms of reference. The first two sections of this chapter review, respectively, the evidence needed to assess the relevance of the projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework (Section 3.1), and the evidence to assess the relevance of the activities funded under Part C (Section 3.2). Section 3.3 reviews evidence on the relevance of the Cooperation Framework, as a whole, which again includes the views of our correspondents and a review of other documentation, as appropriate. The final section (3.4) is the assessment of the relevance of the Cooperation Framework and its projects and activities.

3.1 Review of the Information relating to the Assessment of the Relevance of the Projects funded under Parts A and B

This section addresses the views of the correspondents on the relevance of the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework (Section 3.1.1), and reviews other material necessary to assess the relevance of the projects, as required by the ToR (Section 3.1.2).

3.1.1 Correspondents' Views on the Relevance of the Projects

Box 3.1 – Involvement of Network members/Project partners to Ensure Relevance

There were a number of examples of mechanisms within projects that ensured a project's relevance, for example:

- The conference that was held as part of the **AALBORG +10** project involved plenaries and debates on the Commitments, which were to be one of the major outputs of the conference. It was argued that this ensured that this output, in particular, would be relevant to the needs, not just of the partners, but also of all the local authorities that were in these sessions.
- It was argued the relevance of the **QUICKSTART** project, which aims to build capacity in smaller local authorities to enable them to actively engage in low-cost climate promotion, was evident as it had been developed by the Klima-Bündnis network on the basis of feedback from its members.
- It was argued that the peer review process, which was an integral part of the **EMAS** project, made sure that the project's outputs were relevant to those local authorities involved.
- It was argued that the existence of a steering committee, which involved a number of project partners, contributed to ensuring that **CAMPAIGN** was relevant to the needs of its members.

Not surprisingly, all the project coordinators involved in the various projects considered them to be relevant to the needs of local and regional authorities. The

active involvement of local authority network members had been a particularly innovative means of ensuring the relevance of the outputs of the various projects to the evolving needs of local authorities (see Box 3.1 for some examples). In addition, the majority of network members felt that the projects were relevant, as half of those that expressed an opinion were considering taking some of the project's findings on board, while 18% were changing practices as a result of their involvement in the project. A further 20% found the results interesting, but were not considering changing their approach, while 12% had reservations.

As perhaps can be expected, all of the coordinators who responded believed that their respective projects were relevant addressing the objectives of the Cooperation Framework, ie assessing with the implementation of LA21, assisting with the implementation of other environmental policy, raising local awareness and exchanging best practice. In particular the AALBORG +10 project from which the Aalborg Commitments emerged, covers identical key themes as those contained within the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. Accordingly the AALBORG +10 project was seen as being able to provide the Commission with practical experience on how to develop further the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment.

However, as noted above, a minority of network members raised concerns about the relevance of some of the outputs from the projects, eg SIPTRAM, PHASE and CAMPAIGN. It appeared from the responses that some of these concerns, at least, were the result of a lack of communication leading to unreal expectations. Additionally, there was a feeling in several cases that more money and investment in urban sustainable development was needed in order for the projects to fulfil their potential and enhance the relevance in terms of the impression they make on local authorities (see Section 6.1 in relation to AALBORG +10).

3.1.2 Review of other Information necessary for the Assessment of the Projects' Relevance

The terms of reference required some desk-based research to assess certain aspects of the relevance of the projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework. Specifically, this related to the extent to which the projects and the expenditure allocated to these were relevant to the 'evolved needs' of local authorities. As discussed in Section 1.4.1, the baseline (ie the 'evolved needs') against which the projects were assessed for their relevance was the Commission's evolving policy in relation to the urban environment (see Section 2.1).

Having assessed the project objectives and the calls our conclusion is that the projects were generally relevant to the calls under which they were funded (see Box 3.2).

The fact that five projects were funded in 2002, compared to two in 2001 and 2003, not surprisingly means that the Commission committed significantly more money to fund projects in 2002 than in the other two years (see Table 3.1 for the full figures). The Commission's average contribution to the nine projects was around €562,500, although this is distorted by one particularly large contribution to CAMPAIGN in

2001. The average contribution excluding the one to CAMPAIGN was around €475,000 and these were generally in the range of €350,000 to €550,000, with the other exception to this being MIRIAD21. The contribution of Commission funding compared to the overall budget varies between 78% and 94% for eight of the projects, averaging over 88% – the exception being AALBORG+10 for which the Commission only contributed 43% of the total budget.

Box 3.2: The Relevance of the Projects and the Calls to Decision 1411/2001

Year	Details of the Call	Projects Funded	Conclusions
2001	Relates closely to the Decision	CAMPAIGN	Both relevant to the call as they facilitated exchange of information and promoted cooperation between actors concerned with sustainable development and LA 21.
		RESOURCITIES	
2002	Call for three types of project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU environmental policy; - LA21; and - urban sustainable development. In addition, priority themes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overcoming barriers to sustainable urban transport - Sustainable local economies, inc decoupling transport and economic growth. - Overcoming barriers to sustainable urban management - Gaps in the policy framework 	PHASE	MIRIAD and DISPLAY can be considered to relate to EU environmental policy and LA21, while all 5 projects relate to urban sustainable development. In relation to the priority themes SIPTRAM could address the two transport themes, EMAS the urban management theme and PHASE and DISPLAY the gaps in the policy framework theme.
		MIRIAD 21	
		DISPLAY	
		SIPTRAM	
		EMAS Peer Review	
2003	Call for three types of project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU environmental policy; - LA21; and - urban sustainable development In addition, priority themes included:	QUICKSTART	QUICKSTART was considered to relate to the EU Environmental policy priority and AALBORG +10 to LA21. They both are considered relevant to urban sustainable development. In relation to themes QUICKSTART could be said to address the theme relating to evaluating the impacts of

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tackling barriers to sustainable urban transport - Sustainable local economies, inc decoupling transport from economic growth - Tackling barriers to sustainable management of towns and cities. - Implementing sustainable urban design measures. - Implementing sustainable construction measures. - Evaluating the impact of methods and tools <p>In addition, projects that foster and improve the implementation of the Aalborg charter</p>	AALBORG +10	tools. AALBORG +10 could be argued to address all the other themes given its broad nature and scope and particularly the intention to fund a project that took forward the 1994 Aalborg conference.
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The larger contribution to CAMPAIGN was arguably justified, as the project had a very broad scope, and was also probably related to the fact that the funding of CAMPAIGN was part of the rationale behind the creation of the Framework in the first place (see Section 2.1). As the funding for the remainder of the projects was of a similar level, we conclude (in light of the analysis relating to the relevance of the projects to the calls) that expenditure was distributed proportionately between the priorities.

Table 3.1: Anticipated project expenditure

Year		Total budget	EU %	Contributions		Commission's average contribution
				from EU*	Project's Own	
2001	CAMPAIGN	€ 1,364,398	92.5%	€ 1,262,398	€ 102,000	n/a
2001	RESDURCITIES	€ 459,240	78.2%	€ 359,240	€ 100,000	n/a
2002	PHASE	€ 512,255	93.8%	€ 480,298	€ 31,957	n/a
2002	DISPLAY	€ 438,379	90.0%	€ 394,541	€ 43,838	n/a
2002	MIRIAD21	€ 795,700	87.0%	€ 692,259	€ 103,441	n/a
2002	SIPTRAM	€ 602,676	82.5%	€ 497,134	€ 105,542	n/a
2002	EMAS	€ 590,058	90.8%	€ 535,768	€ 54,290	n/a
2003	AALBORG +10	€ 1,037,274	43.4%	€ 450,270	€ 587,004	n/a
2003	QUICKSTART	€ 459,875	84.9%	€ 390,296	€ 69,579	n/a
2001	All projects	€ 1,823,638	88.9%	€ 1,621,638	€ 202,000	€ 810,819
2002	All projects	€ 2,939,068	88.5%	€ 2,600,000	€ 339,068	€ 520,000
2003	All projects	€ 1,497,149	56.1%	€ 840,566	€ 656,583	€ 420,283

*Funding awarded to projects

3.2 Review of Information relating to the Assessment of the relevance of the Activities funded under Part C

This section reviews the relevance of the activities funded under Part C of the framework. As with the assessment of these activities in relation to other criteria, this was based solely on project-related documentation, rather than information obtained

from correspondents. The activities assessed are listed in the first column of the table contained in Annex IV.A.

There is a clear distinction between the type, and number, of Part C activities funded in the first two years compared to those funded in 2003 (see Annex IV.A). In 2001 and 2002, only five activities were funded, whereas ten were funded in 2003. Of the activities funded in 2001 and 2002, two funded the reimbursement of expenses incurred by experts in attending relevant meetings and conferences, ie the 2003 Barcelona Conference on Sustainable Urban Development (Activity 1 in the table in Annex IV.A) and a meeting involving the Eurocities network (Activity 4). The other three related to the dissemination of information. Two of these were linked to the development of the European Common Indicators project, to which explicit reference was made in the relevant part of the Annex of Decision 1411/2001, so were clearly relevant to Cooperation Framework. The relevance to the Cooperation Framework of the final activity is less clear as it was disseminating European experience with Local Agenda 21 more broadly, specifically at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development.

In 2003, of the ten activities that received funding, nine were linked directly to the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, eg to support its working groups or stakeholder platforms. The other contract – a small research project undertaken by Fedenature – was originally from 2002, but was held over to 2003 for administrative reasons. Given the imprecise nature of the eligible activities as set out in the Annex to the decision, the activity could be considered to be relevant as it relates to the monitoring and evaluation of peri-urban natural spaces. The expenditure on Part C has increased significantly: doubling between 2001 and 2002 to €110,000 and then rising to over €400,000 in 2003 (see Table 3.2).

The increasing focus on activities that support the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment reflects the development of policy. When the Cooperation Framework was first agreed, the thematic strategy had not yet been initiated, whereas by 2003, it had become a focus for the development of policy relating to the urban environment at the EU level. Hence, the type of activities funded has adapted to the new focus of urban policy, which suggests that the emergence of the thematic strategy provided a focus for the Part C activities that had not previously been present. Clearly, this also explains the growth in funding of Part C activities.

3.3 Review of Information relating to the Relevance of the Cooperation Framework

This section reviews evidence on the relevance of the Cooperation Framework, as a whole, with reference to the views of our correspondents (Section 3.3.1) and other documentation, as required by the ToR (Section 3.3.2).

3.3.1 Correspondents' Views on the Relevance of the Cooperation Framework

At least two thirds of the project coordinators who expressed a preference felt that the Cooperation Framework was relevant for exchanging good practice, improving urban sustainable development, implementing Local Agenda 21 and improving the

implementation of environmental policy, more generally. There was a general consensus amongst all the project coordinators taking part in the projects that the Cooperation Framework allowed cities to work jointly, exchange views and experiences and also helped provide local authorities with practical tools and information to implement sustainable development and Local Agenda 21 on the ground. In addition, 95% of the local authority network members that expressed an opinion believed that the Cooperation Framework was relevant to addressing their needs. The relevance of networks to improve urban sustainable development and Local Agenda 21 was also reinforced from discussions held with the experts.

Additionally, some coordinators underlined that, as many local authorities were all trying to find solutions to similar problems, the type of project funded under the Cooperation Framework – ie ones that encourage the exchange of experience and the dissemination of good practice – are just what local authorities need at this time. Consequently, they were supportive of the continuation of a dedicated stream to fund urban sustainability projects.

When expert views were sought on the Cooperation Framework, a majority were unaware of the mechanism, although they were familiar with some of the projects funded under it. Indeed, in attempts to carry out interviews with experts, a large number declined as a result of not knowing about the Framework. In view of the limited awareness of the Framework, it is not possible to generalise that the majority thought that the projects were either relevant or irrelevant. One expert was particularly convinced of CAMPAIGN's and AALBORG +10's relevance. Indeed, this expert believed that, in the possible absence of any concrete legislation arising from the thematic strategy, these two projects were of paramount importance for local authorities in helping them to achieve the aims of the strategy.

3.3.2 Review of other Information relating to the Assessment of the Cooperation Framework's Relevance

In Section 3.1.2, the relevance of the projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework was assessed against the calls and the Decision. In this section, we assess the relevance of the calls and the Decision to the evolving policy framework.

As might be expected there are considerable links between the development of Community policy in relation to urban sustainable development and Decision 1411/2001 (see Section 2.1). The calls for 2001 to 2003 appear to be generally relevant to both the original Decision and to the evolving policy framework, particularly the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment (see Annex III.B). The 2001 call is the least prescriptive, in that it does little more than refer back to the Annex of Decision 1411/2001. The calls for 2002 and 2003 both quote the three objectives of the Cooperation Framework itself, as well as the types of project to be funded, as defined under Part A and Part B of the Framework. The 2002 call states that projects should support current policy work, in particular that relating to the development of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment; while the strategy features even more strongly in the 2003 call. The 2002 and 2003 calls also contain

categories of project that will be funded. These are very broad, and, at a generic level, link to the generalised categories of the Thematic Strategy.

In addition to the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, some of the projects clearly contribute to other Thematic Strategies that are currently being developed within the context of the 6th Environmental Action Programme, and environmental policies. For example RESOURCITIES is relevant to the local level implementation of EU waste policies, while DISPLAY and QUICKSTART relate to local efforts to combat climate change.

The evolution of the funding under the first three calls – ie 2001 to 2003 – has been characterised by a steady increase in the funds being allocated to Part C activities, while the funds allocated to Part A and B projects peaked in 2002, when five projects were funded (see Table 3.2). In spite of the significant increase in funds allocated for Part C activities, the amount of funds allocated, annually, to such activities has never come close to approaching the 20% indicative level that was proposed in the Annex to the Decision. With respect to the projects funded under Parts A and B, in both 2001 and 2003, when only two were funded, the proportion of the funds that covered such projects fell short of the 80% indicative level set out in the Annex to the Decision. In 2002, when five projects were approved, the Commission committed funds that exceeded the budget in the call that year. However, the level of exceedance did not exceed the shortfall in 2002, so there was no need to take money from other funding streams to cover this.

Table 3.2: Analysis of budget allocated by projects and activities per year against call

Year	Call budget	Parts A and B		Part C	
		budget allocated	% of call budget	budget allocated	% of call budget
2001	€ 2,500,000	€ 1,621,638	64.9%	€ 55,000	2.2%
2002	€ 2,300,000	€ 2,600,000	113.0%	€ 109,950	4.8%
2003	€ 3,200,000	€ 840,566	26.3%	€ 410,758	12.8%
2001-3		€ 5,062,204	63.3%	€ 575,708	7.2%

Overall, the Decision set aside €14 million to fund projects and activities under the Cooperation Framework. If this were split evenly between the four years, €10.5 million would have been spent by the end of 2003. In the event, as Table 3.2 shows, just over half of this total (53%) was spent in 2001 to 2003.

In 2003, the allocated funding was going to have been higher with more than the two projects being funded. However, as a consequence of concerns raised by the ENVAC advisory committee funding was limited. Concerns focused on the belief that some organisations were receiving financial support from different sources in DG Environment and other Commission services, and that it was difficult to distinguish how these different packages were spent. There was therefore, considered to be a risk of funding organisations' general running costs and some organisations becoming wholly dependent on Commission money. In addition, CAMPAIGN failed to receive funding in 2003, as it was deemed that the request for an extension would mean funding an ongoing project. AALBORG+10 and QUICKSTART had to enter into negotiations with the Commission in order to obtain funding. As a consequence the release of funds to both projects was significantly delayed.

3.4 The Assessment of the Relevance of the Cooperation Framework

Our assessment of the relevance of the Cooperation Framework and its projects and activities is based on both our desk-based research and the views of our correspondents. From the research, we conclude:

- 1) **The Cooperation Framework's calls, and the projects and activities that have been funded, appear to be relevant to the evolving policy framework, in the form of the Thematic Strategy, but are of less direct relevance to the original Decision that set up the Cooperation Framework.**
- 2) **There is evidence that the calls have become more refined and better focused on the developing policy framework through an evolutionary process over time suggesting that an effective learning process is underway.**
- 3) **The projects and activities are relevant to the 'evolving needs' of local authorities.** In the assessment, rather than identify the evolving needs of local authorities, we took these to be represented by the evolving policy framework, particularly the Thematic Strategy. Given that we found that the Decision, its calls, projects and activities were relevant to the evolving policy framework (see above), then clearly these also meet the 'evolving needs' of local authorities given the effective definition of the latter.
- 4) **The focus on networks has been relevant in that these are perceived, by local authorities participating and the project coordinators, to be a good means of enabling towns and cities to work jointly and to exchange views and experiences in relation to the implementation of urban sustainable development.**
- 5) **The focus on projects that encourage the exchange of experience and the dissemination of good practice is relevant, as towns and cities are all attempting to overcome similar problems in implementing urban sustainable development.**

4 Effectiveness of the Cooperation Framework

This chapter assesses the Cooperation Framework against the second criterion – effectiveness – as set out in the terms of reference. The first two sections of this chapter review, respectively, the evidence needed to assess the effectiveness of the projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework (Section 4.1), and the evidence to assess the effectiveness of the activities funded under Part C (Section 4.2). Section 4.3 reviews the views of the correspondents on the effectiveness of the Cooperation Framework, as a whole. The final section (4.4) is the assessment of the effectiveness of the Cooperation Framework and its projects and activities.

It is worth underlying at this point that the identification of a causal link between a report, or a project, and a policy decision is very difficult to identify. Indeed, most decisions would be based on the assessment of a wide range of information, which is then subsequently influenced by the politics in which that decision is made. Hence, the assessment of the effectiveness – in terms of changing behaviour – of the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework would be difficult even given a larger budget for this work. The following, therefore, is based on the information that it was possible to gather in the course of the project.

4.1 Review of the Information relating to the Assessment of the Effectiveness of the Projects funded under Parts A and B

This section summarises the views of our correspondents in relation to the effectiveness of the projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework.

Many project coordinators felt that it was too early to assess the specific impacts of their respective projects, which in turn makes identifying their effectiveness difficult. This has been highlighted as an issue by the coordinators of AALBORG +10, SIPTRAM, QUICKSTART and DISPLAY. Most of the projects – ie PHASE, DISPLAY, MIRIAD21, SIPTRAM and QUICKSTART – were not yet finished, hence these have not even finished producing the outputs, required under their respective contracts. Even for those which have finished, the nature of the projects – ie that they focus on awareness raising and the exchange of information and experience, rather than producing concrete outcomes – means that identifying an impact, and therefore the effectiveness of the projects is difficult. Hence, no coordinator was able to identify, in the short-term at least, any direct environmental improvements resulting from the projects. However, in the longer-term, around half underlined that clearly the projects have the potential to have a positive environmental impact.

Another complication is that the funding often applies to only one part of the process, which would lead to discernable change. This further limits the ability to attribute actions and impacts directly to projects and was felt in a couple of cases to have limited the effectiveness of the projects. For example, in DISPLAY funding was provided for the development and trialing of the concept but not for the wider uptake

of the display boards, making the impacts of this project hard to identify. Once further work is forthcoming, resulting in more practical trials and efforts on the ground, it will be possible to more accurately identify the effects of this project.

Despite the above issues all the coordinators felt that their projects had made a difference and that the project had resulted in changes amongst local authorities. This was supported by around 20% of local authority network members, who claimed that an involvement in a particular project had changed their behaviour. In addition, around half of the network members that expressed an opinion said that they were considering changing their behaviour as a result of their involvement in the project. For the purposes of presentation, we have split the changes that correspondents claim have arisen from being involved in the projects into the following categories: changes at a local level; changes at a higher/strategic level; broader influence; and further research. Examples of the former are discussed in Box 4.1 and can be classified according to the type of local change that occurred, ie changes to policy, changing standards, disseminating information, lessons learnt and concrete changes on the ground. Examples of the three remaining categories of change identified are considered to add Community value and are therefore discussed in more detail in Section 6.1.

Box 4.1 – Change at Local Level

The following are examples of changes that coordinators and/or network members claim can be traced to the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework. It has not been possible for us to assess independently, whether this is indeed the case.

Changes to policy – As a consequence of their involvement with the **RESOURCITIES** project, Catalonia is developing a waste prevention programme to encourage initiatives similar to those described in the project's good practice guides. In relation to the **PHASE** project there are several examples of changes to policy and the policy process. One of these is from Győr, Hungary, which has held a stakeholder analysis in which other agencies and local authorities are also interested in testing the HIA in their field. They have also changed the decision making process and now hold forums to discuss suggestions with several community groups. **CAMPAIGN** is also considered to have resulted in a variety of changes to policy development by its network members. Malaga's involvement with **CAMPAIGN** has resulted in initiating the Green Charter of Malaga which states the priorities and initiatives for improving the urban environment in Malaga. In Pleven, Bulgaria, the local authority has begun to implement an Ecology Plan for the period 2004-2008. In Ferrara, Italy, sustainability and participation have become goals and tools of local development. In Modena, Italy, their involvement has meant that the province has now integrated environmental principles in policy making and every department is now involved somehow in sustainable initiatives. In Madrid, Spain, the City Council has created an Agency of local development that will take charge of the establishment of Agenda 21. In Botkyrka, Sweden they have changed their views on the concept of sustainable development and have been influenced to cooperate with other local governments internationally.

Achievement of new standards in relation to environmental policy – As a result of the **EMAS** project several authorities are attempting to achieve new standards with the management systems. Examples of these changes include Latvian cities of Liepaja and Jelgava have decided to move from ISO 9000 to ISO 14000, while Gdansk, Poland, is hoping to use the work done in the project in order to become the first authority in a new Member State to be EMAS accredited. As a result of **SIPTRAM** the coordinator believes that a number of authorities have been undertaking retrofitting of buses to improve air quality.

Dissemination of learning to non network members – The **PHASE** project focused its efforts on two pilot cities initially. These two cities have taken further action with their Member States passing on details of the outcomes and information regarding the project via their own networks. It is estimated that, as a result of these actions, 50-60 cities across Europe will now undertake, introduce and mainstream HIA into their local authorities. When the Latvian capital Riga signed up to the **Aalborg Commitments** it invited some of its twin and partner cities to exchange experiences to help the city implement the Commitments. This involved a 2-day seminar discussing solutions.

Taking on board lessons learnt beyond the scope of the project – As a consequence of the **EMAS** project Gothenburg, Sweden, decided to use the peer review methodology used during the project to conduct work within their city.

Concrete changes on the ground – As a result of its involvement in **CAMPAIGN** Malaga has become more active in relation to urban sustainable development. During their city centre regeneration several streets were pedestrianised and more open spaces and green parks created. In addition environmental issues have been promoted through instructive leaflets and environmental education programmes. The city also participated in European Mobility Week for the first time. After having been involved in the development of **DISPLAY** Leicester has built on this for a number of projects. All network members of the **DISPLAY** project responded that they have reacted in some way as a result of their involvement in the project, either by implementing its results, or by seeking to do things differently. A research project called **LASALA** has indicated that the Aalborg Commitments have been adopted by local authorities and resulted in some positive policies. The aim of the **LASALA** project was to create a database, whereby 150 local authorities across Europe undertook self-assessments of their sustainability strategies and policies.

In order to attempt to assess the effectiveness of the projects further, we found it useful to split the projects into two broad types. First, there are those projects which are focused on bringing local authorities together in order to purely raise awareness and share ideas, eg **CAMPAIGN** and **RESOURCITIES**. Then there are those which are focused more around bringing local authorities together in order to encourage the implementation of specific practices and the development of best/good practice guidelines which can then be shared with others – **EMAS**, **PHASE**, **DISPLAY**, **SIPTRAM** and **QUICKSTART**. **AALBORG +10** sits between these two groups as it raised awareness via the conference but also produced the Aalborg Commitments. However, as there is currently no system for implementing the Commitments, there are limited concrete outcomes on the ground. In theory it should be easier to assess the impacts of the latter group of projects than the former.

For the first group and AALBORG +10, impacts on the ground are difficult to identify, as quantifying an increase in awareness is renowned for its difficulty. However, effectiveness of the work can be based, in part, on feedback from network members regarding the projects. Although the overwhelming majority of network members' responses are positive, some are less so. The responses from network members appear to differ depending on both their level and length of involvement with the projects. A particular example of where opinions are divided is with the CAMPAIGN project. A few network members are slightly critical of the way in which CAMPAIGN was run, and, newcomers in particular, were concerned about the level of information they were receiving. There was also confusion regarding dissemination of information as a follow up to the Aalborg Commitments. However, this should be viewed in the context of CAMPAIGN not having their Commission funding extended. This has had an impact on those who are part of the CAMPAIGN network, and goes some way to explaining complaints regarding the lack of contact post AALBORG +10. In addition the loss of CAMPAIGN meant that the coordinator for AALBORG +10 had to take on much more work than originally anticipated in order to maintain contacts. Despite the occasional negative comments regarding CAMPAIGN, there were more positive views than negative and several network members and experts who we spoke to, felt that the current lack of such a network is a substantial loss for local authorities. Reasons for this include CAMPAIGN's ability to provide a contact point for local authorities. Moreover, the good will that that was developed during CAMPAIGN was highlighted by the AALBORG +10 coordinator as contributing to the effectiveness of that project and that it enabled local authorities not only to keep up to date with what others were doing but also to communicate and disseminate their own findings.

The coordinator of RESOURCITIES felt that it had contributed to the raising of awareness, thus achieving its objectives, and reported that it resulted in concrete action on the ground (see Box 3.1 and Section 6.1). Overall the projects in this first group that have finished appear to have done what they set out to do, in relation to organising the conference and developing the Commitments (AALBORG +10) and the setting up of a travelling exhibition and the production and dissemination of a good practice guide (RESOURCITIES).

Outputs from the second group, dealing with aiding the implementation of specific practices and the development of best/good practice guidelines, are slightly easier to assess. For instance, some of these types of projects have actually exceeded the expected levels of impact. One example of this is with the PHASE project, the results of which have been disseminated to a higher number of local authorities than expected. Those involved in the EMAS project – both the coordinator and the majority of the network members who responded – felt that the peer review methodology used in that project was a success (see Box 4.2 for details). The DISPLAY project also appears to have been well received with the coordinator feeling that the DISPLAY calculation exercises have probably contributed to a more systematic approach in municipalities to improve the energy and emissions performance in public buildings (which was set out as one of the expected impacts). The coordinator has also observed that the project has already resulted in raised awareness among the visitors and users of the buildings, which could be expected to

contribute to the expected impact of raised awareness among the public. The coordinator of SIPTRAM felt that the project was contributing to the raising of awareness and had already resulted in concrete action on the ground (see Box 4.1 and Section 6.1). Additionally, SIPTRAM appears likely to produce its required outputs. Despite the fact the project is still ongoing, feedback from QUICKSTART is also good (although it should be noted that the coordinator feels it is premature to judge the outputs of the project). Network members comments received were positive with one highlighting that they felt the QUICKSTART methods used were a good approach to disseminating information to smaller municipalities (see Box 4.2).

Box 4.2 Developing Tool Kits and Good Practice

The use of Peer Review Methodology – During the EMAS Peer Review project, peer review, or ‘critical friends’, was used alongside other techniques such as conferences, training, email communication, newsletters etc in order to develop and implement guidance in the member cities. This involved the cities effectively pairing up in order to visit one another and help each other to implement environmental management systems, including the identification of sources and options for management. This was considered to be an excellent way of working towards improvement and to share expertise by all those involved – the dynamic of the network and the way they worked together following on from this intense peer review period was improved. Network members felt more relaxed about working together and asking others for advice. It was felt that people had built up contacts with whom they could work in the future and it was noted that all network members – even the most experienced – learnt something from the process.

The use of Pilots Cities – During the PHASE project, in order to develop a Health Impact Assessment toolkit, two pilot cities in Italy and Slovakia trialled the documents and worked with the coordinator to develop an effective toolkit. The toolkit when completed was translated into five different languages and accompanied by an awareness raising event and a training workshop on HIA held in the two pilot cities. An evaluation of these methods was conducted and as a result a revision of the toolkit occurred. Following the evaluation process a resource pack for cities and towns was developed and also translated into five languages. Data were collected via national networks of healthy cities and from country networks resulting in the development of country specific tools and translated into two European languages. According to the coordinator as the project could only support the practical implementation in 2 partner cities a more informal exchange of information has been created in both countries where the national co-ordinator is disseminating and helping the other cities. The co-ordinator notes that the evaluations were useful as they highlighted a number of problems that needed to be addressed - although there were more c
cted. Moreover the evaluations took longer than planned due to political and technical reasons in the cities. There was a mixed response as to how effective the working methods were. Whilst the majority were happy with the level of information they received about the PHASE CAMPAIGN and HIA a number of network members felt that not enough information was provided and that some of the more difficult issues to understand were not given enough explanation

Development of a training methodology – QUICKSTART is developing a methodology for local authorities to work out an immediate climate policy action programme in a very short time. The project will develop this methodology and introduce its broader application through the training of promoters who will use the QUICKSTART method to work with local authorities. It builds on the large experience and already established tools and methods by the Climate Alliance and other networks and experts.

On the whole, coordinators and the network members that we corresponded with felt that the projects have contributed to improved communication practices in the local authorities involved and the identification of new ways of addressing problems. The communication within projects appears overall to have been successful, as the majority of the network members were happy with the way in which information was communicated, although in relation to specific projects some network members felt that more information could have been circulated. There were numerous methods employed in order to ensure effective communication within the projects, these and their efficiency are explored further in Section 5.1.

As a consequence of the projects many involved network members stated that they had developed working relationships with other representatives of local authorities, which people intend to maintain after the specific project has ceased. It was reported by 65% of network members that after involvement in the projects they would be more likely to contact others for help in future, with 40% saying that they were no much more likely to do this. One of the interesting things about a couple of the projects, illustrated by some of the responses from those involved with the EMAS peer review and QUICKSTART, is that many more experienced authorities entered into networks in the belief that they would effectively be the teachers. However, it was noted that once they started communicating more with others they realised they could still learn from the others in the group, improve their practices and solve problems.

4.2 Review of Information relating to the Assessment of the Effectiveness of the Activities funded under Part C

As with the projects discussed in the previous section, none of the activities funded under Part C of the Cooperation Framework were intended to deliver a specific action on the ground. Hence, it is not possible to identify any direct environmental impact arising from these activities. Indeed, compared to the projects the activities are further removed from the practice of local authorities, in that they are, either focussed on EU-level activities, eg the development of the Thematic Strategy, on disseminating the European Common Indicators project, or on reimbursing expenses (see Annex IV.A). However, given that our assessment concluded that most of these were considered to be relevant to the evolving policy framework (see Section 3.2), it could be argued that they all have the potential, in the long-term, at least, to be effective in promoting LA21 and urban sustainable development, as the Thematic Strategy will also support these.

4.3 Review of Information relating to the Effectiveness of the Cooperation Framework: Correspondents' Views

This section reviews the views of the correspondents on the effectiveness of the Cooperation Framework, as a whole.

In addition to the particular examples of changes in practice mentioned, above, involvement in the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework appear to have encouraged network members to communicate more with each other. As noted above, around two-thirds of those who responded said that they were now more likely to approach others for advice. Around half of the network members said that they had been approached by other network members involved in the project, while two-thirds had passed on information that they had received as a result of their involvement to other local authorities not involved in the project (see Table 4.1). Half of the coordinators also said that they were aware of informal exchanges of information and visits between their network members.

Table 4.1: Information on extent of interaction between local authorities resulting from their involvement in the projects

	Yes	No
Have you been approached by another member of the project seeking advice on good practice?	51%	49%
Have you been approached by a member of any of the partner networks also involved in the project seeking advice on good practice?	34%	66%
Have you shared outputs or other information gained from your involvement in the project with others not involved with either the network or any of the partner networks?	66%	34%

NB: Percentages exclude those network members who did not express an opinion.

Of those that expressed an opinion, all the coordinators and many experts were supportive of the requirement that projects funded under the Cooperation Framework should include networks. Reasons for this view were that local authority networks were an effective way of exchanging experience and disseminating good practice between local authorities. In this respect, any measure, such as the Cooperation Framework, that encourages cooperation and exchange of information is important in view of the similarities of environmental problems faced by cities across the EU.

The majority of coordinators noted that local authorities see networks as a useful means of lobbying, as they can have a greater influence on EU institutions as a group than as single authorities. This is due to their ability to represent the views of a collective group, which in turn can help strengthen the role of cities in European decision-making. A couple of respondents from the larger cities criticised networks on the basis that they represent the needs of a large and diverse group of local authorities, which, to some extent, reinforces the benefit perceived by others.

4.4 The Assessment of the Effectiveness of the Cooperation Framework

To some extent, the difficulty in identifying the effectiveness of the projects funded by the Cooperation Framework in contributing to the implementation of urban

sustainable development is inherent in the scope and objective of the original Decision, and the accompanying calls. For example, the 2003 call states that ‘financial assistance would be supplied for encouraging the conception, exchange and implementation of good practices’. For such projects, it is always difficult to identify their effectiveness, as a result of the intangible nature of their impacts. In addition, it clearly takes time for local authorities to change their practices, even if they do take on board the outputs from a particular project. So, even for the projects that include an implementation phase, it is still unlikely that there will be a significant change or impact that can be attributed solely to any project funded by the Cooperation Framework. In relation to the activities, these are generally further separated from local authority practice than the projects, and thus identifying any impact is virtually impossible. However, we would agree with the coordinators in that both the projects, and indeed the activities, have the potential to have an impact in the longer-term. So, our conclusion in this respect is:

- 1. Given that many projects are not yet complete, and that many of the others projects were not designed to raise awareness rather than directly alter practice, it is not possible to quantify any environmental benefits directly resulting from the projects or activities. However, the nature of the projects and activities suggests that, in the longer-term, there is the potential to have a positive environmental impact.**

Having said this, some coordinators and network members were prepared to identify changes that they claimed were attributable to the project in which they were involved. Examples of such changes in local practice are given in Box 4.1, while examples of other types of changes are given later (see Boxes 6.1 to 6.3). Of course, it is difficult to prove such claims, as most political decisions cannot be traced to one particular project or report, rather they are the result of a number of different elements that come together to influence decision-makers. However, several of the projects have built-in learning mechanisms, which should contribute to the effectiveness of these projects in the longer-term (see Box 4.2). Given, therefore, that some correspondents have claimed that their involvement in projects at least *contributed* to a change at the local level, and the built-in learning aspects of other projects, we conclude that:

- 2. Those involved in the projects, ie local authority members and coordinators, have reported that various projects funded under the Cooperation Framework have been a contributing factor to some political decisions resulting in changes at the local level. It is likely that further examples of such changes will occur in the future.**

The fact that the Cooperation Framework has focussed on networks of local authorities appears to have been an effective mechanism for raising awareness and sharing experience. The existence of networks, generally, appears to be beneficial for local authorities in that it enables them to communicate with and learn from each other, as well as pooling their voice at the European level, and generally feel less isolated in addressing the problems that they face. Requiring the projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework to include a network appears to have been beneficial in that a majority of the network members that responded said

that they were now more likely to approach others for assistance. While, arguably, the mere existence of the network should enable this, the fact that these network members claim that an involvement in the projects encouraged this suggests that the projects could act as a catalyst to show those towns and cities that might be less use to exploiting networks, to use them. Additionally, clearly, the existence of a network aids the dissemination of the project's outputs. Hence, in this respect, we conclude:

- 3. Requiring the involvement of networks has been an effective way of improving communication between network members and of disseminating the projects' outputs.**

5 Efficiency of the Cooperation Framework

This chapter assesses the Cooperation Framework against the third of the four criteria – efficiency – as set out in the terms of reference. The first two sections of this chapter review, respectively, the evidence needed to assess the efficiency of the projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework (Section 5.1), and the evidence to assess the efficiency of the activities funded under Part C (Section 5.2). Section 5.3 reviews evidence on the efficiency of the Cooperation Framework, as a whole, which reviews of other documentation, as appropriate. The final section (5.4) is the assessment of the efficiency of the Cooperation Framework and its projects and activities.

5.1 Review of the Information relating to the Assessment of the Efficiency of the Projects funded under Parts A and B

This section addresses the views of the correspondents on the efficiency of the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework (Section 5.1.1), and reviews other material necessary to assess the relevance of the projects, as required by the ToR (Section 5.1.2).

5.1.1 Correspondents' Views on the Efficiency of the Projects

In terms of decision making all projects involved collaboration between a number of different partners, accordingly it was imperative that clear and defined roles of each party were set out. From our discussions with project coordinators it appears that this did occur. For instance, in the AALBORG +10 project a core group of relevant project partners was formed which set up a specific email group to deal with matters relating to the conference and commitments. A share of tasks document was drafted early on in the project detailing what was required of each partner. In PHASE an expert group was formed to help the project management team develop the various products required of the project. This group was selected on the basis of their specific expertise in either HIA or health policy/public health. DISPLAY had a core group of 21 municipalities and 5 external experts, and regular meetings with a Steering Group (5 cities) and an Implementation Group (21 cities). In SIPTRAM, ICLEI is responsible for the overall project management whereas project partners VCD and T&E are responsible for specific defined tasks such as the expert organisation on environmental standards.

In relation to dissemination the following methods, or variations of these types, were undertaken by all of the projects: project websites; monthly newsletters (both paper and email copies); and progress reports. These were seen as an efficient means of disseminating information quickly to a large number of local authority network members cost-effectively. The frequency and level of information contained within these different forms varied between projects. For instance network members involved in the EMAS project received almost weekly email updates, whereas other projects such as DISPLAY received information on a monthly basis. Additionally, a number of the projects also employed methods such as forum and working groups,

conferences, presentations, and individual site visits. The latter obviously requiring more organisation and time to arrange.

Opinions on which methods were the most effective were divided. Three quarters of the coordinators felt that the latter types of methods which enabled personal contact with network members were the most effective, although these are not necessarily the most cost-efficient, as they took far more effort to organise. Conversely, the other two believed modes such as newsletters and mailouts, which enabled relevant information such as the use of best practice examples in local authorities to be distributed easily to a wide audience, were most useful. These latter two were the coordinators of CAMPAIGN and the EMAS peer review, so their views might reflect the type of information exchange that was occurring and was appropriate for these projects.

From the network members' perspective opinions on the quality of information and timeliness seems to vary within projects with some network members happy with the level of communication and others not (see Table 5.1). This seems to be linked to the type of network member they are, ie how closely involved they are with the project and also how long they have been involved. Full details of the types of communication methods used are outlined in Box 5.1.

Table 5.1: Network members' views on the information received from project coordinators

	Excellent	Good	Average	Disappointing	Poor
Do you feel that the information communicated to you about the project has been	25%	54%	11%	5%	5%
	Very	Quite	Satisfied	Quite disappointed	Very disappointed
How satisfied are you with the quality of information received?	40%	27%	23%	6%	4%
How satisfied were you with the frequency of the information received?	30%	26%	36%	4%	4%

NB: Percentages exclude those network members who did not express an opinion.

The Commission's role in effecting the efficiency of the projects was discussed with all the coordinators. One point raised by a couple of project coordinators was the delays in receiving notification of successful bids. In particular it was highlighted that the lack of a formal mechanism which allows interaction between the bidding agencies and the Commission is reported as a shortcoming on the Commission's part. An example of the problems encountered is the case of the AALBORG +10 project. Delays in the approval of the project resulted in the City of Aalborg commencing work on the conference, including an announcement that there would be a conference, before final confirmation of the funding had occurred. The lateness of funding also led to the original timescale having to change, inevitably this caused disruption and additional time was spent having to alter this and deal with various matters arising as a result. It should be noted that there was a clear reason for these delays within the Commission due to a hold up in the approval process and confusion over the eligibility of projects. It was also noted that the Commission's approach to, and engagement with, the projects had improved over time. It was noted that the

standardised reporting requirement now used by the Commission, was an improvement to the earlier approach taken in relation to reporting.

A couple of coordinators commented that more time was spent on the projects by coordinators and project partners than expected. For example it was commented that the RESOURCITIES project exceeded its original budget with additional expenses having to be found by project partners. This was due to the project being extended for three months and more demanding needs than anticipated in setting up the exhibition. The AALBORG +10 project also required significantly more resources than expected. This was particularly due to the increased scope of the project during negotiations with the Commission, resulting in significant resources needed to develop the Aalborg Commitments (which were just an idea in the original proposal) but no additional budget. Another reason for the extended resources was the loss of a functioning CAMPAIGN network owing to a lack of repeat funding. This meant that the coordinator of AALBORG +10 had to take on a far greater role to ensure that participants were informed.

Box 5.1 – Methods used by Projects to Communicate

One way Communication:

- Development of websites - including project details, good practices, specific conference sites, information dissemination
- Information folders on management practices
- Guides to policy
- Exhibitions
- Leaflets
- Newsletters/magazines, electronic newsletters, details in the CAMPAIGN newsletters
- Factsheets

Two Way Communication:

- Email communication – including the development of specific email lists, specific email address for projects developed for ease of reference
- Working groups
- Presentations at non project events/conferences
- Visits to municipalities
- Development of open platforms for communication and influencing
- Awards schemes, eg European Sustainable City Award opportunity to showcase best practice

Sample comments from projects regarding innovations in relation to communication:

RESOURCITIES Coordinator – *‘the willingness of cities to host the exhibition and the initiatives that have subsequently arisen, suggest that the exchange of experience has resulted in good practice being taken up’.*

DISPLAY Coordinator – *‘the most effective methods for communication with the network meeting*

of information

between the network members has mainly taken place during the annual conference, but also

*SIPTRAM – ‘In addition, to working with municipalities the project has successfully brought
exchang*

5.1.2 Assessment of other Aspects of the Projects’ Efficiency

In Section 3.3.2, we reviewed the evolution of expenditure of projects and activities under the calls for 2001, 2002 and 2003 and concluded that the distribution of expenditure between the various calls’ priorities was distributed proportionately. The ToR also requires us to assess the cost-effectiveness of the projects. As shown in Table 3.1, most of the projects received similar levels of funding, apart from CAMPAIGN. This is one of the few projects that has finished and was not eventually funded in full, due to questions of eligibility and queries as to whether some of the costs were justifiable.

As the other projects all received similar levels of funding and, from our research, appear to have comparable ambitions, then the levels of funding seem to be, at least consistent. The difficulty in assessing effectiveness, as discussed, above, makes it difficult to assess whether the projects were cost-effective, in that it was not possible to assess the extent to which the projects had resulted in concrete environmental impacts at this time. Additionally, the projects that have finished appear to have achieved what they set out to do – ie organising a conference or producing reports – and so have arguably been efficient to the extent that we are able to assess this.

5.2 Review of Information relating to the Assessment of the Efficiency of the Activities funded under Part C

It has been difficult to assess the efficiency of Part C activities as they are accompanying measures and consequently problematic to assess, as outlined above. The table in Annex IV.A summarises the budget for these activities. On the basis of our experience of organising meetings and undertaking research, the level of funding allocated to the activities seems appropriate. For example, similar activities – eg support to working groups and support to stakeholder platforms – received equivalent levels of funding. The activities that involved purely the reimbursement of experts generally average around €1000 per expert, which appears reasonable for a two-day event.

In terms of their efficiency, the activities for which we were able to identify a concrete output appear to have been efficient to the extent that they produced what they set out to do (see Annex IV.A). Reports were produced, experts attended conferences, and the development of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment was supported.

5.3 Review of Information relating to the Efficiency of the Cooperation Framework

In order to complete our assessment of efficiency, the ToR required us to review other Community funding mechanisms. In assessing the extent to which the Cooperation Framework is complementary to other Community funding mechanisms, a list of these was characterised (see Annex II.B). Clearly, if instances of the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework were found to be receiving funding from a number of other Commission sources this might be viewed as an inefficient use of resources on the Commission's part.

On the other hand it would make sense for the Commission to make links with other areas of work where it could be found to have beneficial effects in promoting urban sustainability and Local Agenda 21. In viewing Annex II.B, it can be seen that certain funding mechanisms that fund urban projects, eg URBAN, clearly do not overlap with the Cooperation Framework, as they primarily fund infrastructure, rather than projects led by networks. Whilst networks are funded by other mechanisms, eg URBACT and INTERACT, these tend to focus specifically on sharing experience of projects funded under that mechanism, such as URBAN and INTERREG. There are also numerous projects focused on some of the issues dealt with under the Cooperation Framework, for instance CIVITAS deals with transport issues, but these tend to focus on infrastructure projects and providing financial support to individual local authorities to implement specific measures on the ground. Also, DG Environment's LIFE Programme has funded a number of urban environment projects among its broader portfolio of environment-related projects. Most of the projects funded are pilot projects, although some funding is given to networks, so there is clearly some potential scope for overlap. Accordingly, the exclusive funding of networks dealing with progressing urban sustainability and Local Agenda 21 has not been dealt with extensively by any other Commission funding stream, and does therefore seem to be a quite distinctive and worthwhile aspect of this programme.

It is also worth noting that the amount of funding allocated to the Cooperation Framework over its four-year life span is very small when compared to other EU funding mechanisms. For example, the LIFE Programme into which the Cooperation Framework is to be merged under LIFE+ (see Section 7.2) had a budget of €640 million for the five-year period from 2000 to 2004. In other words, the Cooperation Framework has a budget that amounts to a mere 3% of LIFE's per year. The levels of Commission co-financing that are eligible under the Cooperation Framework are, however, significantly higher than most other instruments. For example the maximum of 95% under the 2001 to 2003 Cooperation Framework calls compares favourably with the levels of co-financing the typical 50% co-financing eligible under LIFE. However, the co-financing under LIFE varies from 30% to 100% depending on the type of project and its revenue potential.

Nevertheless, as mentioned above, in order to complement other activities occurring in the EU towards achieving urban sustainable development, the funding of projects under the Cooperation Framework should not necessarily occur in isolation from other initiatives. One of the experts pointed out that there was some correlation

between the Framework and the research programmes FP5 and FP6. The expert argued that the fact that FP6 has taken up the Aalborg Commitments was a good thing, as it demonstrates that work funded by DG Environment is being taken up by other funding streams.

5.4 The Assessment of the Efficiency of the Cooperation Framework

In relation to efficiency, we can make the following conclusions:

- 1. The projects and activities funded under the Cooperation Framework generally appear to have achieved their required outputs and have generally been well received by their network members.**
- 2. The absolute level of funding appears to have been generally reasonable when related to the scope of the project or activity, ie awareness raising and bringing local authorities together to share practice.**
- 3. There have been some issues in relation to the Commission's management of some of the projects, particularly over delays with respect to making a decision regarding whether a project will receive funding. However, it was acknowledged that the Commission has improved its management of the Framework, as time has passed.**
- 4. To date, the Cooperation Framework appears to have provided a distinct and worthwhile funding stream, as no other funding mechanism has focussed exclusively on funding networks to promote urban sustainable development.** However, it is important to note that networks focusing on the urban environment, although not requiring the involvement of an established local authority network, can be funded under other mechanisms.

6 Community-added Value of the Cooperation Framework

This chapter assesses the Cooperation Framework against the fourth criterion – Community-added value – as set out in the terms of reference. The first two sections of this chapter review, respectively, the evidence needed to assess the Community-added value of the projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework (Section 6.1), and the evidence to assess the Community-added value of the activities funded under Part C (Section 6.2). Section 6.3 reviews the views of our correspondents on the Community-added value of the Cooperation Framework. The final section (6.4) is the assessment of the Community-added value of the Cooperation Framework and its projects and activities.

6.1 Review of the Information relating to the Assessment of the Community-added Value of the Projects funded under Parts A and B

In the terms of reference, Community-added value was defined as utility and viability. In order to assess utility, three key aspects have been assessed; could this work have been completed without Community funding or would it have been more appropriate if undertaken at another level; the impact of networking; and were there any follow up actions resulting from the projects. The correspondents' views on these are addressed in Section 6.1.1, while Section 6.1.2 addresses the correspondents' views on the viability of the projects, ie what happens once funding from the Cooperation Framework has ceased.

6.1.1 Utility

In relation to Community funding, all but one of the project coordinators who expressed an opinion were convinced that funding via the EU was the only way that these projects could have taken place due to their pan EU nature. It was also the networking aspect of the projects, which those involved feel is vital and distinctive, that many felt made funding under the Cooperation Framework so important. Several noted that it is often difficult to obtain funding for such activities elsewhere as such projects tend to lack specific, concrete outputs. At least two highlighted the inability of the CAMPAIGN to obtain funding from other sources, when it failed to have its funding from the Commission renewed, and the difficulties in obtaining funding for work to implement the Aalborg Commitments, as illustrations of this (although it was noted that there are also additional limitations which are affecting CAMPAIGN). It was argued by one coordinator that it is important to fund networks as sustainable development is currently 'undergoing a learning stage in which stakeholders need to learn what it means for them and how it can be implemented'. One specific aspect of funding highlighted by half of those who commented was the 95% funding level historically offered by the Commission under the Cooperation Framework. It was felt that this was important given the nature of the projects and the difficulties in raising other funds for some types of activity. This was unfavourably compared to the possibilities under LIFE, whereby only 50% co-financing from the Commission is offered, which is also the maximum proportion that can be offered under the proposed LIFE+ programme (see Section 7.2).

As highlighted above, coordinators and local authority network members considered networking to be a vital part of the projects. As such the majority of network members who responded on this issue benefited from the involvement of networks (see above). EU-wide networks provide a platform for local authorities, if run effectively, allowing expertise, experiences and good/best practice to be brought together and disseminated to a larger audience. This provides a mechanism by which those involved in the networks can gain benefits from research even if they do not themselves have the resources to carry out such research, effectively multiplying the audience. It also allows disparate authorities, which would not normally have communicated, the opportunity to share information in a structured manner. Finally, many of the local authorities in the EU are attempting to deal with the same problems, so coming together in ways such as those facilitated by the Cooperation Framework they can deal with these issues in a more efficient and informed manner. The costs of engaging via a network, so long as the network is being well managed and maintained, are not as high for individual local authorities as engaging in the debate alone. This is especially important in light of EU enlargement, as the local authorities in the new Member States could be expected to be less knowledgeable about the practices that have been developed by the authorities in the more established Member States in relation to urban sustainable development.

As well as helping local authorities to understand and help each other, other advantages of networks noted by correspondents were that they are able to help raise the profile of issues and concerns by bringing individual organisations together, hence giving more weight to arguments allowing them to speak with a stronger collective voice. This is important at the EU level where many authorities can feel that their concerns are not being addressed, and the majority do not necessarily understand how best to engage. It was also felt that there could be benefits with working together with people at a regional and national level. It could be argued that the number of authorities involved in urban networks is increasing and that this could be used to demonstrate the increasing importance placed on this type of communication.

As discussed in Section 4.2, it is still early in the process for some projects, which, therefore, limits the ability to assess Community added value, as some are still expecting or may result in action in the future. Having said this, coordinators and network members suggested some instances where they believe that the projects had had a broad range of impacts. Changes in relation to the local level were identified above (see Box 4.1). In addition to these, coordinators and network members claimed that there have been higher-level more strategic changes as a consequence of the Cooperation Framework projects. For example, incidences of projects having affected Member State policy, an organisation's priorities, EU policy development and the implementation of policy were proposed (see Box 6.1 for examples). There are also incidences of the scope of the work on projects broadening out to involve other stakeholders, or simply resulting in the involvement of more parties than anticipated (see Box 6.2).

Box 6.1 - Higher Level Influence

The following are examples of changes that coordinators and/or network members claim can be traced to the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework. It has not been possible for us to assess independently, whether this is indeed the case.

Influencing Member State Policy

The influence of projects on national practice. First, a consultant working for ADEME (the French Agency for the Environment) wrote a report based on the municipal good practices identified in the **RESOURCITIES** prevention strategy launched in February by the French Minister for the Environment, Mrs Bachelot. The coordinator is continuing to cooperate with French waste prevention expert groups and Paris (information from a local authority). Second, in relation to **AALBORG +10**, the Finnish Association of local and regional authorities have translated the Commitments and organised an event to promote them to the Finnish Government. This event was intended to encourage the government to work with the environmental officers, land use planners and local politicians (details from the project coordinator).

Influencing the Priorities of Organisations

During the **PHASE** project a high level representative from WHO indicated that they have adopted HIA as one of their priority themes (information from the project coordinator).

Influencing the Development of EU Policy

As outlined in the section on relevance some of the projects funded by the Cooperation Framework are closely linked to the development of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment (see Section 2.1). Those involved in the **CAMPAIGN** also felt that the Strategic Papers produced under the project were of great interest to the Commission and feel that following their submission to then environment Commission Wallström's cabinet they have been of some influence (information from a project partner and coordinator).

Influencing the Implementation of EU Policy

Various projects have had or may in future have an influence on the implementation of EU environmental policy. **RESOURCITIES** has affected the way in which municipalities implement EU waste policy (information from members), while **DISPLAY** has impacted on the implementation of the energy in buildings Directive (information from coordinator). In addition it has recently been commented that the model presented by the Aalborg Commitments could be a possible way forward for implementing the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment.

Box 6.2 - Broader Influence

The following are examples of changes that coordinators and/or network members claim can be traced to the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework. It has not been possible for us to assess independently, whether this is indeed the case.

Two examples of broader influence which are very different in scope have emerged from the **DISPLAY** and **AALBORG +10** projects. According to the **DISPLAY** coordinator, efforts are being made to extend the sphere of influence of the project beyond its original network members and to other stakeholders. An example of this is the preparation of a Partnership Framework designed to involve public and private bodies in disseminating **DISPLAY** all over Europe.

In relation to broadening influence, a less sophisticated example comes from **AALBORG +10**. As a result of mainly local authority efforts and enthusiasm the Commitments have now been translated into 14 languages, as opposed to the planned number of five. The coordinator is also currently preparing a guidebook for energy and transport issues with some local authority networks to provide ideas to help implement the Aalborg Commitments in relation to climate change, energy and transpo
voluntarily spent much greater resources on the project than initially envisaged in the funding proposal – as did the coordinators of other projects – hence the projects have benefited from the good will and enthusiasm of those involved resulting in some cases the project exceeding the anticipated goals.

Another key element of value resulting from the Cooperation Framework, is that the majority of projects funded are resulting in the development of thinking on a particular subject. This has furthered the debate, and correspondents claim has also led to the identification of the need for new research and, therefore, of new funding (see Box 6.3).

Box 6.3 – Development of Further Research

The fo
d/or network members claim can be traced to the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework. It has not been possible for us to assess independently, whether this is indeed the case.

Energie-Cités and four European partners are to get additional funding from DG TREN under the Intelligent Energy for Europe (IEE) programme to continue and enlarge the application of technology developed under **DISPLAY** aiming at getting 1,000 local authorities to sign up. This additional funding will last until the end of 2007. The name of the project is “Towards Class A”. Of the network members, Frankfurt is considering developing a project proposal to the SAVE strand within IEE that will build on **DISPLAY** and focus on providing information to tenants in multi-flat residential buildings.

The work undertaken by the **CAMPAIGN** project and the contacts developed were considered to have led not only to the development of the **AALBORG +10** funding bid, but also made the event more successful. The coordinator of **AALBORG +10** felt

that without CAMPAIGN the high level of attendance would not have occurred and that reasons for such high numbers could partly be attributed to the links and good will generated by CAMPAIGN.

AALBORG +10 – The Aalborg Commitments have been integrated in the STATUS project in which ICLEI is a partner - this aims to develop locally-relevant targets for local authorities across Europe to self-assess progress with urban sustainable development. This will be achieved via the development of an online tool into which a range of targets will be entered.

ELISEE (Encouraging Local Initiatives for Sustainable Lifestyles in Enlarged Europe) was developed and funded as a result of **RESOARCITIES**.

ICLEI were approached by an Italian organisation that developed a project building upon **SIPTRAM**.

Based on experiences from the **EMAS Peer Review** project, UBC has handed in a bid for funding entitled "Managing Urban Europe 25", involving 14 cities, among them Siuliai and Leeds, which were involved in the original EMAS project.

Two of the smaller municipalities that responded stated that **QUICKSTART** had helped them take a more comprehensive approach to climate change, and had helped them to initiate additional projects focusing on raising awareness in schools.

In conclusion, although it can be difficult to distinguish added value of the projects, especially in light of the fact that some projects feel it is too early to fully identify this, there are some clear messages that have emerged from the correspondents. First, that it is felt by those interviewed that the funding of the Cooperation Framework projects at an EU level has been important. Second, that networking adds value to projects and is considered to be vital for raising awareness and educating authorities re urban sustainable development. Finally, coordinators and network members were able to identify a raft of additional benefits from the projects.

6.1.2 Viability

An important element in identifying the viability of a project is whether or not the coordinators have identified areas for future work following on from the project and considered applying for further funding. It is also important that the coordinator has been able to access these funds, once the needs have been identified. The project literature and the coordinators suggested that all the projects have plans to continue with the work in the future. Even those which have not yet finished their work are planning to focus on development for the future, eg work phase 7 of the QUICKSTART project is dedicated to the development of arrangements for the continuation of the training and dissemination of the methodology to other countries. As can be seen from the details in Box 6.3, most coordinators claim that future funding has already been secured for several projects, eg DISPLAY via the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme and PHASE via increased prioritisation with WHO. Some projects are currently putting in bids for further funding. Following on from the

EMAS peer review UBC has recently been awarded funding under the Cooperation Framework 2004 call for work entitled Managing EU 25.

In relation to the ability to gain funds, as discussed in more detail in Section 6.3, below, over half of the coordinators expressed concern that with the ceasing of funding under the Cooperation Framework this may be a problem in future due to lack of funding opportunities for projects which focus on sharing practice and raising awareness. For the two larger overarching projects CAMPAIGN and AALBORG +10 this is already an issue. Even though CAMPAIGN, itself cannot apply for money as a separate entity, it has still been difficult for the partners involved to gain funding, as a result of limited funding opportunities, irrespective of the merits of the projects seeking such funds. In relation to AALBORG +10, there is a clear need for work undertaken to date to be continued in order to ensure that those who have signed up to the Aalborg Commitments receive support to promote implementation and have somewhere to go in order to ask advice and share practice. This is currently not being addressed and although there is enthusiasm to do this on the part of the coordinator opportunities appear to be limited. Thus, while a number of cases of follow-on funding have been noted, the immediate viability of some projects is not assured after cessation of Cooperation Framework funding; and long-term viability of others may not be assured.

6.2 Review of Information relating to the Assessment of the Community-added Value of the Activities funded under Part C

As discussed in Section 3.2, many of the activities, particularly those funded in 2003, supported the work of the Thematic Strategy, which is being developed on the rationale that it is justifiable at the Community level. Hence, based on the review on activity documentation, it can be concluded that the activities supporting its development bring an added value at the Community level. As the activities linked to the Thematic Strategy are contributing to the development of Community policy, it is unlikely that any of these would have worked better, if they had been funded at another level. Of the other activities, it is also unlikely that those relating to the Cooperation Framework, or those specifically referred to in Decision 1411/2001, would have been better funded at another level. Equally, it is difficult to see how such activities could have been effectively funded through a mechanism at a different level.

6.3 Review of Information relating to the Community-added Value of the Cooperation Framework: Correspondents' Views

The majority of coordinators felt that it is difficult for pan-European networks to obtain funding for their activities, in particular through other channels of funding such as going through individual Member States, who tend to prioritise national based projects for funding; hence EU support is fundamental. A review of the type of project that has been funded to date supports this initial observation. One exception to this perhaps, is the WHO PHASE project, as WHO ROE had a certain amount of money put aside to deal with the issues dealt with under PHASE in their normal work programme. This means that perhaps the project could have gone ahead without

Cooperation Framework funding, however possibly not on the same scale as the Framework funding allowed (see Section 3.1.2 for details).

In discussions with project coordinators, the funding of networks was felt to be a particularly effective means of helping provide a European framework for dissemination of good examples of sustainable practices, particularly as there were many overlaps between the networks involved. As mentioned, above, at least half of the coordinators were concerned that the funding of such projects would not be possible now that the Cooperation Framework has ceased to exist. For instance a number of networks *inter alia* ICLEI, CEMR, EUROCITIES, ACCR, Energie-cités, UBC and WHO are involved with more than one of the projects funded by the Cooperation Framework. This means that added value occurs as the information generated by the projects is often disseminated to a wide number of local authorities, even if they are not actually involved in a specific project.

There were a number of suggestions from our correspondents as to how the Cooperation Framework could be improved. First, it was noted that it is sometimes difficult to fit a project into the calls for projects under the Framework and that more flexibility in this respect would be useful. One way of doing this could be to initiate a dialogue between the Commission and the urban sustainability networks, or to leave a part of the funding programme open to initiatives from the networks, which could also include the possibility of co-operation between different networks.

Second, in relation to the application process, itself, it was suggested that this could have been improved with more prior notice from the Commission on priorities, and possibly the introduction of a two-stage application process. The first step could have consisted of a request for project outlines from networks, while the second would have required those selected at the first stage to draw up a more detailed project specification. It was proposed that this approach could potentially have saved time for both applicants and the Commission and also potentially addresses the delays that some projects experienced in obtaining a final decision on funding from the Commission. A couple of the coordinators suggested that it would have been useful to have a dedicated project officer at the Commission for the duration of the project.

It was also suggested that the results of the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework could be better integrated with on-going Commission initiatives and that the Commission should explore the outcomes of the projects in the policy and legislative work and possibly use the projects to help to identify the need for changes in existing or new areas of legislation such as the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. Another suggestion was that the scope of the objectives could have been broadened to foster the governance pillar, ie more cooperation between the different spheres of governments on sustainability issues and also inclusion of other parts of the world in sustainable activities.

On a more practical level it was noted that it is important to have documents aimed at local authorities in the local language much more so than at the national or EU levels, as a high level of language proficiency cannot be assured. Thus it was suggested that

this needed to be recognised by the Commission, either in relation to the level of provision in project budgets relating to dissemination, or possibly having a certain amount of funds ringfenced for this purpose.

It was also suggested that the Commission could also disseminate, or at least better publicise, the information from the projects. Finally, it was repeatedly suggested that the Commission should encourage better practice between networks by arranging common meetings between the various partners involved in all the funded projects. This would allow a better understanding of methods used and help cross-fertilisation of project ideas.

6.4 The Assessment of the Community-added Value of the Cooperation Framework

The discussion in the previous sections, taken together with the assessment of the previous criteria, suggest to us that the Cooperation Framework has brought some Community-added value in relation to the promotion of urban sustainable development. In the context of utility, we conclude:

- 1. It appears unlikely that much of work funded by the Cooperation Framework – either projects or activities – could have been funded at another administrative level, or indeed that it would have been more useful to do so.** This conclusion is based on the fact that the activities have generally supported EU-level funding mechanisms, ie the Cooperation Framework, itself, or the development of an EU policy, ie the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, while projects have focused on pan-European networks. Those who have benefited from these projects believe that they would not have been funded at another level, and we see no reason to doubt this.
- 2. The focus on pan-European networks also seems to have brought added value.** Networks are clearly a good means through which its network members, in this case local authorities, can share experience and learn from each other, as well as to pool resources to have a more effective voice at the European level.
- 3. Some of the projects have at least contributed to decisions that have resulted in an activity, or change of practice, that has the potential to be beneficial to the environment.** As with the discussion of Section 4.3.2, it is difficult, if not impossible, to identify a one-to-one cause and effect relationship between a report and a policy decision. In reality, decisions are taken on the basis of a range of supporting information. However, the fact that decisions relating to the projects are being taken suggests that some of the projects, at least, may have contributed to a decision being made, and therefore that they will eventually have an environmentally-positive impact.

In relation to the issues that the coordinators raised in relation to the added value of the Framework, it is worth noting that some of these issues are already being taken on board by the Commission, eg:

- The application procedure has been developed so that there is now a negotiation phase, which was developed to address some of the problems encountered in relation to the earlier calls.
- Projects selected under the 2004 call have been encouraged to include a budget for translation to ensure that local authorities in a wider range of countries are able to benefit from the outputs of the projects.

In relation to specific calls, and the priorities contained therein, clearly there is a role for both the networks and the Commission in setting these priorities. Some of the coordinators complained that it was difficult to fit projects into the priorities of the calls, whereas the Commission will have chosen the priorities to reflect broader needs at the European level. Clearly, while it is important for the networks to communicate the needs of their network members to the Commission, so that the Commission can take these into account when setting the priorities, this is not the only information the Commission will use to do this. Similarly, while from the projects' perspective, it would have been useful to have a dedicated officer at the Commission, the Commission does not have the resources to achieve this.

Within the scope of this assessment, a number of questions have emerged that it has not been possible to answer. These relate to the extent to which the networks are the best means through which to undertake projects, compared with possible alternatives. For example, it is not clear whether it would have been better for dedicated and specialised researchers to undertake the projects, with the involvement of local authorities, the results of which could then have been distributed through a partner network.

Another suggestion was that the scope of the objectives could have been broadened to foster the governance pillar, ie more cooperation between the different spheres of governments on sustainability issues and also inclusion of other parts of the world in sustainable activities.

7 Funding Future Projects that Promote Urban Sustainable Development

Sections 7.1 and 7.2 contain the views of our correspondents on, respectively, the general funding of projects to promote urban sustainability and, more specifically, on the proposed absorption of the Cooperation Framework into LIFE+. Our views on these issues are presented in Section 7.3.

7.1 Correspondents' Views on the General Funding of Projects promoting Urban Sustainability

Unsurprisingly, approximately 40% of local authority network members flagged up the need for more funding for projects promoting urban sustainability. Some of these highlighted the need to fund networks, with a couple of network members specifically referring to the usefulness of CAMPAIGN and were disappointed that funding for this had stopped. Also in relation to funding, were requests for easier access to, and better information about, Commission funding programmes. A couple of network members also made broader and more strategic suggestions, such as ensuring that all existing and future initiatives and policies are in line with sustainable development, and the need to mainstream sustainable development into the programmes and policies of other DGs. Two more specific suggestions were that for local authorities to qualify for funding they should meet certain requirements such as being EMAS-registered or some other equivalent sustainability criteria.

Some of the project coordinators were slightly more critical of the Commission's approach to date. One argued that the Commission needed to take a more consistent approach to urban research, which could support effective urban policy and successful implementation actions. Indeed, a couple felt that the current approach tended to be very fragmented and often impractical for local authorities. Half of the coordinators suggested that the Commission should work more closely with local government associations, networks, towns and cities; as there was a need for more demonstration projects which allowed experiences on the ground to be reported back and disseminated through the networks.

Discussions with one expert in particular raised the importance, in their view, of the need for continued funding of the CAMPAIGN project and the AALBORG +10 process. They believed that this was essential in supporting the good work already achieved by both projects. In particular, they stressed the links between the two projects and the future delivery of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. They felt that in the likelihood of the absence of any Directives or Regulations to enforce the aims of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, the impetus would fall on voluntary actions undertaken by Member States and local authorities to implement mechanisms such as Sustainable Urban Transport Plans and Sustainable Environmental Management Systems. Accordingly, the most sensible and efficient way of achieving this would be to build on what has already achieved by CAMPAIGN and the Aalborg Commitments. The need to continue the CAMPAIGN project was also mentioned by coordinators (other than the one from CAMPAIGN) and a couple of network members.

Additionally, a couple of correspondents noted that at present there tends to be an emphasis on inventing new schemes and projects, which may not be the best utilisation of resources at the local level. Accordingly, rather than emphasising funding for new pilot projects, if a scheme is shown to work then the practicalities of putting this into practice on a wider scale should be explored through some follow-up mechanism. For instance one of the aims of the Cooperation Framework is to share experiences and identify best practice across Europe. If examples of things working well in certain cities were found then it would make more sense to build on this.

7.2 Correspondent's Views on the proposed Integration of Future Urban Funding with LIFE+

The discussion with project coordinators, network members and experts on the proposed integration of urban sustainability into the future LIFE+ programme revealed a poor understanding of the new proposal. Many people to whom we spoke – including one coordinator – were not aware that the Cooperation Framework had finished, or that future projects would be funded under LIFE+. When the changes were explained common responses from local authority network members were surprise and concern.

Whilst very few respondents were aware of the details of LIFE+, the majority had either first hand experience or theoretical knowledge of funding under the LIFE funding stream. However, in many ways the concerns raised in relation to LIFE are still pertinent to the LIFE+ proposal, as it currently stands. For instance, discussions with experts revealed that whilst there is general consensus that LIFE has been responsible for some good projects, nevertheless it is often viewed by local authorities as being unduly complicated and bureaucratic. Accordingly, it was recommended that if LIFE+ was to learn from the mistakes of LIFE, then a review of the funding criteria would be welcome, as would a more transparent approach as to how the process actually works. Indeed, one expert was slightly sceptical of large funding streams such as LIFE, in particular raising concerns that due to the complicated nature of applying for funding, it tends to be the larger cities or those with established political backing, which make available the necessary resources to fill out forms and know what 'buzz words' to include. This means that it is not a typical profile of local authorities who obtain funding, often at the expense of smaller or less motivated cities or those from new Member States; who arguably may actually need help more.

Another point raised by experts, coordinators and network members alike was the difficulty in obtaining matched funding, which was perceived to be a problem with the current LIFE programme that requires at least 50% cofinancing. This was seen as a particular problem for networks of local authorities, which are rarely in a position to match fund as discussed above.

One of the coordinators felt that urban issues are a weak priority of DG Environment and that if urban projects are to be funded from LIFE+, this will be the beginning of the end for such cross cutting projects. In addition the majority of LIFE+ funds will

be managed through national ministries. This is a clear obstacle for pan-European projects of the nature discussed here, ie those designed to bring many European local authorities together to share good practice and increase awareness of issues across the EU, as Member States tend to give priority for bodies from their own countries. Furthermore, it would be extremely complex, if not impossible, for national ministries to arrange or coordinate networking activities at the local authority level. Another coordinator believes that if LIFE principles are transferred to the type of project funded under the Cooperation Framework, then there will be severe implications. Moreover, it was feared that applying for projects under LIFE+ (based on the experience with LIFE) would become more cumbersome (in relation to the length of time needed, communicating through national contact points) which means administrative difficulties will occur. Accordingly a number of comments were made for improvements such as the need to simplify some of the rules governing the programme, earlier notification of the timetable and a lighter application procedure. One coordinator thought funding under LIFE may bring some benefits as it is a well known stream of funding so may result in more bids being put forward.

7.3 Conclusions on the Future Funding of Projects to Promote Urban Sustainable Development

From the above, and discussions in the workshop, it is possible to draw out a number of conclusions in relation to the future funding of projects to promote urban sustainable development:

- Even though there is a range of Community funding instruments that can be used for funding urban projects, both currently, ie Cooperation Framework, and in the future, ie LIFE+ and possible future structural funds, awareness of the range of instruments is not as good as it might be. There is a need for stakeholders to be better informed about these and potential future changes in order to ensure that the best projects are funded and that stakeholders are able to adapt to the new funding situation.
- There is a need to think more about how good practice should be exchanged, with a potential role for the EU in ensuring that this takes place. This will be essential to further improving the urban environment in the future, given the EU's limited competence.
- Given the conclusion that networks are useful in terms of facilitating the exchange of practice and raising awareness on urban issues, it is important that funding of effective networks is possible.
- It is felt that the Commission should not exclude the possibility of funding ongoing projects/networks, if they are considered to have a proven Community-added value and are being managed effectively.

In relation to LIFE+:

- The complex application process for LIFEIII – if it is to be replicated under LIFE+ – is likely to act as a major entry-level barrier for local authorities, especially those with no track record in developing such bids in the past. The process therefore, needs to be made simpler than is currently the case under LIFE.

- There is also concern about the lack of transparency in selection procedures under LIFE and the relatively low – when compared to the Cooperation Framework – level of co-financing from the Commission.
- It is important that funding reaches the local authorities with the greatest need both in terms of resources and need for improvement in their urban environment. Thought needs to be given to how to reduce the entry barriers and make sure that funds are received by as broad a diversity of local authorities as possible.
- LIFE+ and other future funding measures will be important vehicles for the delivery of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. Thought needs to be given and pro active measures taken, in order to ensure that future EU funds can deliver the strategy. Consideration should specifically be given to eg possible different levels of co-financing and variable management structures depending on the project type.
- In order to ensure that projects to promote urban sustainable development are funded, there is a need to effectively mainstream urban issues, and particularly the priorities in emerging EU urban sustainable development policy, into future funding mechanisms. This applies not just to LIFE+ but is equally important in terms of the future structural funds, which may offer more opportunities for pan European projects.
- For best practice to be effectively shared it is important that learning and good practice exchange takes place at a pan-European level. Thought therefore, needs to be given to how a predominantly nationally managed fund like LIFE+ can deliver pan-European projects.

8 Summary, Conclusions and Discussion

8.1 Summary and Conclusions

In summary, the first point to make is that the assessment of the Cooperation Framework was not an easy task, as a result of its relatively low profile among those not involved in its projects. There is therefore little available in terms of truly independent views or sources for the assessment. We have still not been able to engage with one of the projects – MIRIAD 21 – sufficiently, as we have yet to receive the project coordinator's questionnaire. In addition to the eight responses from the coordinators that we did manage to obtain, however, we received around 70 questionnaires from local authority network members and project partners and spoke to around 40 experts and local authorities.

From the information that we have received and analysed, we would conclude that the Cooperation Framework has played a unique and useful role in bringing together, developing and disseminating knowledge in relation to LA 21 and urban sustainable development. It should be noted that money from this funding stream has contributed to raising awareness of urban issues and changed practice (see Section 4) despite low levels of awareness within local authorities about the details of the Cooperation Framework. It is worth noting that the EU policy framework in relation to the urban environment has moved on since the Framework was first created, as the development of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment has become the focus of such policy. The projects and activities funded by the Cooperation Framework have been relevant to both the calls issued under the Framework and the evolving policy framework, although less so to the original Decision reflecting this evaluation of priorities. Furthermore, the use of networks appears to be particularly relevant to the type of project funded under the Cooperation Framework, ie those that aim to raise awareness and exchange practice. Finally, the focus on such projects does appear to be relevant – at least to some authorities – as all local authorities are facing the same problems in relation to sustainable development and therefore need information on how they might address this.

The assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the projects funded under the Cooperation Framework is more difficult, as a result of the fact that many of the projects and activities were not meant to produce changes that were readily quantifiable, eg an actual physical measure on the ground. Rather they focused on raising awareness, the production and dissemination of good practice and the implementation of specific practices, which aim to deliver environmental improvements in the longer-term. Consequently, it was not possible to identify any environmental benefits that have arisen as a direct result of a project, although all projects, and even activities, do have the potential to contribute to the delivery of environmental benefits in the longer-term. While this was entirely appropriate in relation to the types of project and activity to be funded under the Cooperation Framework, both in relation to what was set out in the respective calls and to the needs of local authorities, it makes them difficult to assess, because they have in their nature rather intangible objectives. Having said that, we are able to make some observations in these respects. First, project coordinators and network members were prepared to identify examples of changes that have taken place – both at the local and

more strategic levels – that they claim were the result of the projects. Additionally, there appears to be general satisfaction with the outputs of and means of dissemination used by projects and a belief that the use of networks has been effective. Second, the absolute level of funding given to the projects and activities appears to be relatively consistent in that similar projects received a similar level of funding and this did not appear to be excessive, either in proportion to the outputs or to other comparable EU funding activities. Third, the projects and activities generally achieved what they set out to do. Finally, as a result of the fact that the activities focused on EU-level developments, and that the projects involved pan-European networks, it appears unlikely that these should, and even could, have been carried out at another level.

In addition, the Framework generally complements other Commission funding mechanisms, which broadly focus on delivering concrete actions or disseminating practices relating to a specific funding mechanism. In this respect the Framework, through its focus on funding networks of local authorities and less tangible projects relating to the urban environment filled a niche in the existing funding mechanisms.

It will be important to ensure that, under the forthcoming LIFE+ Programme, that there is the possibility of funding projects such as those funded by the Cooperation Framework. Clearly, also, it is important to ensure that such projects do deliver and raise awareness among stakeholders, and stronger mechanisms could be put in place to ensure that this happens. Additionally, thought needs to be given to more innovative means of involving smaller urban authorities, which have less capacity and generally less ability to access European funds.

The consolidated findings of the assessment are as follows:

- 1) **The Cooperation Framework's calls, and the projects and activities that have been funded, appear to be relevant to the evolving policy framework, in the form of the Thematic Strategy, but are of less direct relevance to the original Decision that set up the Cooperation Framework.**
- 2) **There is evidence that the calls have become more refined and better focused on the developing policy framework through an evolutionary process over time suggesting that an effective learning process is underway.**
- 3) **The projects and activities are relevant to the 'evolving needs' of local authorities.** In the assessment, rather than identify the evolving needs of local authorities, we took these to be represented by the evolving policy framework, particularly the Thematic Strategy. Given that we found that the Decision, its calls, projects and activities were relevant to the evolving policy framework (see above), then clearly these also meet the 'evolving needs' of local authorities given the effective definition of the latter.
- 4) **The focus on networks has been relevant in that these are perceived, by local authorities participating and the project coordinators, to be a good means of enabling towns and cities to work jointly and to exchange views and experiences in relation to the implementation of urban sustainable development.**

- 5) **The focus on projects that encourage the exchange of experience and the dissemination of good practice is relevant, as towns and cities are all attempting to overcome similar problems in implementing urban sustainable development.**
- 6) **Given that many projects are not yet complete, and that many of the others were not meant to produce concrete outputs, it is not possible to quantify any environmental benefits directly resulting from the projects or activities. However, the nature of the projects and activities suggests that, in the longer-term, there is the potential to have a positive environmental impact.**
- 7) **Those involved in the projects, ie local authority members and coordinators, have reported that various projects funded under the Cooperation Framework have been a contributing factor to some political decisions resulting in changes at the local level. It is likely that further examples of such changes will occur in the future.**
- 8) **Requiring the involvement of networks has been an effective way of improving communication between network members and of disseminating the projects' outputs.**
- 9) **The projects and activities funded under the Cooperation Framework generally appear to have achieved their required outputs and have generally been well received by their network members.**
- 10) **The absolute level of funding appears to have been generally reasonable when related to the scope of the project or activity, ie awareness raising and bringing local authorities together to share practice.**
- 11) **There have been some issues in relation to the Commission's management of some of the projects, particularly over delays with respect to making a decision regarding whether a project will receive funding. However, it was acknowledged that the Commission has improved its management of the Framework, as time has passed.**
- 12) **To date, the Cooperation Framework appears to have provided a distinct and worthwhile funding stream, as no other funding mechanism has focussed exclusively on funding networks to promote urban sustainable development.** However, it is important to note that networks focusing on the urban environment, although not requiring the involvement of an established local authority network, can be funded under other mechanisms.
- 13) **It appears unlikely that much of work funded by the Cooperation Framework – either projects or activities – could have been funded at another administrative level, or indeed that it would have been more useful to do so.** This conclusion is based on the fact that the activities have generally supported EU-level funding mechanisms, ie the Cooperation Framework, itself, or the development of an EU policy, ie the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, while projects have focused on pan-European networks. Those who have benefited from these projects believe that they would not have been funded at another level, and we see no reason to doubt this.
- 14) **The focus on pan-European networks also seems to have brought added value.** Networks are clearly a good means through which its network members, in this case local authorities, can share experience and learn from

each other, as well as to pool resources to have a more effective voice at the European level.

- 15) **Some of the projects have at least contributed to decisions that have resulted in an activity, or change of practice, that has the potential to be beneficial to the environment.** As with the discussion of Section 4.3.2, it is difficult, if not impossible, to identify a one-to-one cause and effect relationship between a report and a policy decision. In reality, decisions are taken on the basis of a range of supporting information. However, the fact that decisions relating to the projects are being taken suggests that some of the projects, at least, may have contributed to a decision being made, and therefore that they will eventually have an environmentally-positive impact.

In relation to the future funding of projects to promote urban sustainable development:

- 16) **Even though there is a range of Community funding instruments that can be used for funding urban projects, both currently, ie Cooperation Framework, and in the future, ie LIFE+ and possible future structural funds, awareness of the range of instruments is not as good as it might be. There is a need for stakeholders to be better informed about these and potential future changes in order to ensure that the best projects are funded and that stakeholders are able to adapt to the new funding situation.**
- 17) **There is a need to think more about how good practice should be exchanged, with a potential role for the EU in ensuring that this takes place. This will be essential to further improving the urban environment in the future, given the EU's limited competence.**
- 18) **Given the conclusion that networks are useful in terms of facilitating the exchange of practice and raising awareness on urban issues, it is important that funding of effective networks is possible.**
- 19) **It is felt that the Commission should not exclude the possibility of funding ongoing projects/networks, if they are considered to have a proven Community-added value and are being managed effectively.**

In relation to LIFE+:

- 20) **The complex application process for LIFEIII – if it is to be replicated under LIFE+ – is likely to act as a major entry-level barrier for local authorities, especially those with no track record in developing such bids in the past. The process therefore, needs to be made simpler than is currently the case under LIFE.**
- 21) **There is also concern about the lack of transparency in selection procedures under LIFE and the relatively low – when compared to the Cooperation Framework – level of co-financing from the Commission.**
- 22) **It is important that funding reaches the local authorities with the greatest need both in terms of resources and need for improvement in their urban environment. Thought needs to be given to how to reduce the entry**

- barriers and make sure that funds are received by as broad a diversity of local authorities as possible.**
- 23) LIFE+ and other future funding measures will be important vehicles for the delivery of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. Thought needs to be given and pro active measures taken, in order to ensure that future EU funds can deliver the strategy. Consideration should specifically be given to eg possible different levels of co-financing and variable management structures depending on the project type.**
- 24) In order to ensure that projects to promote urban sustainable development are funded, there is a need to effectively mainstream urban issues, and particularly the priorities in emerging EU urban sustainable development policy, into future funding mechanisms. This applies not just to LIFE+ but is equally important in terms of the future structural funds, which may offer more opportunities for pan European projects.**
- 25) For best practice to be effectively shared it is important that learning and good practice exchange takes place at a pan-European level. Thought therefore, needs to be given to how a predominantly nationally managed fund like LIFE+ can deliver pan-European projects. Effective networks of local authorities are one mechanism to achieve this.**

8.2 Discussion

The assessment of Chapters 3 to 7, coupled with the discussion at the workshop, revealed a number of issues on which a more detailed discussion is needed before the recommendations are presented in the next chapter. These are the role of networks; the financing of projects involving networks; the implications of merging the Cooperation Framework into LIFE+; and the role of the urban unit within DG Environment. Additionally, some thoughts are given about this assessment.

It is with noting, however, that some of the discussion below, and the suggestions that are made, are contrary to current thinking in the Commission, in particular, in relation to the nature of future funding under LIFE+. It is recognised that this is the case, but it is important to highlight these issues at this stage, while the format of the future funding stream has not yet been finalised.

8.2.1 Role of networks in raising awareness

The assessment concluded that the requirement that all projects funded by the Cooperation Framework include an established pan-European network of local authorities was relevant and effective and that it added Community value to the projects. The Commission feels it is important to communicate with the thousands of local authorities in the EU, as their views and experience differs from that of the Member States. It is not possible for the Commission to maintain direct relationships with each of these authorities, hence networks of local authorities are an effective way of allowing the Commission to pass on its messages and for local authorities to develop and learn from one another. As was discussed in Section 2.1, the Cooperation Framework has its origins in the recognition of the importance of such networks. The positive assessment of the role of the networks in the Cooperation Framework projects arose primarily due to the fact that, by their very nature, networks are a

potentially efficient means of distributing good practice and of raising awareness, which is one of the primary goals of the Cooperation Framework. Additionally, the fact that the networks are established means that there is an institutional memory, which helps to retain the expertise within the network, as opposed to, for example, a network set up for the purposes of a specific project, which then disbands and ceases to function at the end of the project.

From the local authorities' perspective, the pan-European networks are perceived to be a good means of learning from the experience of other local authorities from outside of their own countries. Such links enable a local authority to bypass national politics, which might, for example, not be as predisposed to urban sustainable development as the local authority itself.

In theory, therefore, networks do seem to be a potentially effective and efficient way of addressing the needs of both the Commission and local authorities. However, from our discussions with representatives of the existing local authority networks and the Commission, there seems to be a degree of mistrust and misunderstanding between the Commission and the networks. This is arguably part of the reason why the potential benefits are not being realised. In the course of the project, it was not possible to identify the source of this, but it could be linked to an apparent evolution of Commission thinking on the role of networks and the uncertainty facing the networks in light of the integration of the Cooperation Framework into LIFE+.

Prior to the Cooperation Framework, CAMPAIGN was funded by the Commission, which continued under the Cooperation Framework, although it has now ceased. When CAMPAIGN was funded, it was clearly felt that funding a network of networks was beneficial. However, as the Cooperation Framework has developed, the projects funded moved away from being pure awareness raising projects, as arguably the two funded in 2001 were, suggesting that the Commission's thinking on the role of networks has evolved, and it appears that this process is still ongoing. On the other hand, the networks are faced with the loss of a targeted funding instrument, and have the uncertainty of its incorporation into LIFE+, which is a source of anxiety for them. As we argue below, different local authorities have different needs – some of which still require awareness raising – so more thought needs to be given as to how the Commission engages with these and the use it makes of the networks in doing so. How the Commission engages networks will depend *inter alia* on the type of local authority involved in the network, the objective of the network and the effectiveness of the communication between the network and its network members.

However, when looking towards the future, it is important to distinguish the beneficial involvement of networks in the projects funded from the issue of whether networks should lead such projects. In order to consider how this might be done, it is useful to discuss other issues, first.

8.2.2 Co-financing of projects undertaken by networks

As was discussed above, the level of co-financing for which a project is eligible under the Cooperation Framework is high compared to other Commission funding mechanisms (see Section 5.3). Additionally, the projects funded under the Framework have generally made use of this provision with most receiving co-financing of at least 85% from the Commission (see Table 3.1). The issue of co-financing was therefore raised regularly in the course of the research with networks generally arguing that a high level of co-financing was needed for the projects that they do. Those opposing such a high level of co-financing argued that the fact that such a high level of co-financing is required suggests a lack of political commitment on the part of the local authorities involved in the projects that have been funded by the Cooperation Framework.

These apparently opposing views need not necessarily be contradictory. It should be noted that comparisons with the co-financing levels applicable under LIFE are not necessarily directly relevant. The reason for this is that different local authorities are not necessarily at the same level or stage in taking on board the sustainable development message. Arguably, those that have been actively involved in networks for a number of years no longer need their awareness raising, whereas there will be other local authorities, particularly in southern and eastern Member States, which are still not as aware of the sustainability message or engaged in EU processes (see Section 4.1). This is linked to the concern raised within the Commission that it is the 'usual suspects' that apply and are successful in obtaining funds, whereas the majority of local authorities remain disconnected from the debate and it is these that one would ideally wish to reach. One could argue that it is difficult to gain political commitment from the more disconnected local authorities, as they are not yet at the stage where such a commitment can be offered if they were not themselves prepared to offer a higher level of co-financing.

The existence of local authorities with different needs – ranging from a need to hear the basic sustainability message, through raising awareness to the active implementation of urban sustainable development policies – suggests that there is arguably a need for different types of programmes that make funding available for urban sustainability projects. The levels of co-financing could also be differentiated within each programme, as is currently the case with LIFE, and be degressive, as with certain agricultural subsidies (eg single farm payments in the UK under Regulation 1782/2003), ie the level of co-financing reduces over time. This reduction in subsidy would allow the projects to become gradually more independent, increasing the likelihood of securing non-Commission financing and the maintenance of viability. For projects, or stages of a project, targeted at raising awareness, high levels of co-financing would arguably still be applicable, whereas for other types of project, levels typical of those currently applicable under LIFE might be appropriate.

One means of targeting the local authorities that are currently disconnected from the process might be to fund outreach activities. This might, for example, be a project that needs to include local authorities that have not traditionally been involved in EU-funded projects. For such an approach to happen, it would seem that a dedicated focal point, eg an agency, would need to be set up to identify those local authorities that

have not been involved and to seek ways of encouraging these to participate. For example, this could be through bringing partners together, eg matching ‘experienced and engaged’ local authorities with those which have little experience of EU funds and have not yet fully engaged in the sustainability debate. One possibility could be a partner search facility of the type set up on DG Research’s FP6 home page, or some means of actively twinning local authorities. Of course, to engage the most disconnected local authorities effort would need to be employed to ensure that local authorities are on the database in the first place. Beyond this, thought would need to be given to the most cost-effective way of a focal point engaging in outreach activities – it might, for example, involve the local authority networks – but a more proactive approach is necessary to ensure that those local authorities most in need of assistance can and do receive it. One option that might be worth considering is a Clearing House, along the lines of the one set up by UNEP ROE for its EST goes EAST project⁴.

8.2.3 Implications of merging the Cooperation Framework into LIFE+

Given that the principal source of funds for urban sustainable development projects within DG Environment will be LIFE+, it is important to consider how such issues might be addressed within a future LIFE+ programme. An additional issue raised in relation to the existing LIFE programme is that the application process for LIFE funding is considered by many, including local authorities, to be complex. Indeed, it is much more complex than the application process of the Cooperation Framework, which already has been perceived as cumbersome by some of the network coordinators. For local authorities that are inexperienced with EU funds, this adds an additional hurdle to obtaining funding, and this again argues for differentiated programmes that vary in their complexity.

From the perspective of urban environment projects, therefore, it would appear to be valuable if LIFE+ could contain a range of sub-programmes, including one specifically related to raising awareness, which could be used to fund the type of project financed by the Cooperation Framework. As these sub-programmes would vary significantly, it would be important to put in place different management structures to reflect the objectives and complexity of the projects to be funded. The use of sub-programmes with different management structures within Commission funding programmes is not unprecedented. For example, such an approach has been proposed by DG Enterprise in its recent proposal to establish its Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP)⁵. The sub-programmes under LIFE+ could, therefore, be differentiated in relation to, *inter alia*:

- The type of activity that they would fund;
- The organisation that would undertake that activity;
- The objective of that activity, eg awareness raising or pilot project;
- The complexity of the application process;

⁴ http://esteast.unep.ch/default.asp?community=est-east&page_id=4CAF0AF0-F6E4-4EDB-A113-8510C105F3B5

⁵ Commission of the European Communities *Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme 2007-2013* (COM(2005)121) 6.4.2005

- The degree of co-financing;
- The absolute level of funding; and
- The management structure.

All these would clearly have to be linked to the differing needs of the recipients, including local authorities. One sub-programme with high programme co-financing, but low maximum levels of funding, and simple procedures might, for example, focus on raising awareness by aiming to pump prime ‘unengaged’ local authorities with the aim of enabling them to apply for funds under another LIFE+ sub-programme, which has lower Commission co-financing levels, or even for the new third strand of the Structural Funds.

Given that it is proposed that 80% of the funds under LIFE+ would be allocated by Member States through national programmes, then from the points set out above, it is possible to argue that these national programmes would also have to reflect these sub-programmes. Additionally, the 20% retained by the Commission could be split into sub-programmes. The inclusion of the sub-programmes in the national programmes, including one that enables *inter alia* awareness raising and dissemination would have the benefit of including a potentially transnational strand into Member States’ programmes. In other words, as a result of this sub-programme, Member States might be required to set aside in their national programmes resources to ensure that the outputs from the relevant LIFE+ projects in their country are translated and disseminated to other EU Member States. Alternatively a dedicated dissemination programme could be set up within the 20% of funds retained by the Commission. Given the need for outreach to ‘unengaged’ local authorities, as discussed in the previous section, outreach activities could also be funded from a sub-programme of this 20% of the funding.

However, in order to ensure that such pump-priming and awareness raising leads to a positive environmental impact, applications should be required to show the raised awareness will be taken forward. The applicant must show how local authorities will be encouraged to take on board what they learn and give examples of the type of changes to which the project might lead.

Other aspects of the Commission’s evolving approach to Cooperation Framework projects are also important, ie the need to include a dissemination strategy and to take account of translation costs to ensure that the results of the project are potentially available to as wide an audience as possible. Clearly, both of these approaches are fundamentally important to communicate the outputs from projects to the unengaged local authorities mentioned earlier. Similarly, projects funded under LIFE+ could also be required to disseminate and translate their outputs, where appropriate. An extra dimension to a dissemination strategy would be a requirement for all LIFE+ projects, which have a potentially broad applicability, to include a relevant local authority network as a partner.

8.2.4 Role of the Urban Unit in DG Environment

It appears that LIFE+ will be managed by a specific unit within DG Environment. There is a need for DG Environment's urban unit to actively engage with those managing LIFE+ to ensure that LIFE+ can and does fund projects that contribute to urban sustainable development, generally, and more specifically the objectives of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. However, given that urban environment projects can also be funded under other mechanisms, there is also a need for the urban unit in DG Environment to engage with the relevant units in other DGs. Of particular relevance would be DG Regio's INTERREG programme, and its successor transfrontier strand in the new Structural Funds programme. As with LIFE+, the urban unit needs to ensure that DG Regio's Structural Funds programme can and does fund projects that contribute to its urban environment policy objectives. It would also be important to link LIFE+ with the network-based projects that are currently in the pipeline for funding under DG Research's FP6, which are essentially funding networking activity often using virtual means. As with the Structural Funds, it would be important for the urban unit to engage with the relevant unit in DG Research. In both cases, a starting point might be a meeting of the relevant desk officers.

In relation to the funding of networks, per se, there is scope for this under both LIFE+, as the proposal published by DG Environment stated explicitly that networks could be funded, and INTERREG. However, the fact that awareness still does need to be raised in some local authorities suggests that there could still be a potential benefit from enabling Cooperation Framework style projects to be funded under LIFE+. This could, for example, be enabled under one of the sub-programmes under LIFE+.

Finally, given that funding for new projects to promote urban sustainable development under the Cooperation Framework has now come to an end, and that LIFE+ funding will not begin until 2007 at the earliest, the urban unit should ensure that consideration is given to what to do in the meantime if continuity of arrangements is desired. One potential means of addressing this gap would be to engage with other DGs – notably DG Regio and DG Research – as soon as possible to ensure that forthcoming relevant calls allow projects promoting urban sustainability to be funded.

9 Recommendations

From the discussion of the previous chapters, a number of recommendations can be drawn. In relation to the *existing projects* funded under the Cooperation Framework:

1. In order to ensure that the ongoing projects funded in 2003 and 2004 are as effective as they possibly could be the Commission should consider organising a meeting to bring together those coordinators who have either led projects in the past, or who are currently leading on projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework. This should be focused on exchanging experiences and good practice in the management, utilisation of methods and communication – both within the project and in terms of broader dissemination. This follows on from the discussion of Section 6.3.
2. While it is recognised that the Commission has improved its processes it is important to maintain effective communication with the projects throughout their life in order to get effective results (see Section 6.4).

In relation to meeting the *needs of local authorities*, the Commission should recognise that:

3. Different local authorities are at different stages of understanding in relation to implementing urban sustainable development policies. While some are actively engaged in such matters, others still do not yet fully understand the issues, and so will benefit from awareness raising activities, while others might not even have yet entered into the debate and could be even more difficult to engage.
4. Give thought to how it engages with local authorities, and the role that the networks play in such engagement.

In relation to *LIFE+*:

5. LIFE+ should have sub-programmes, both in the national programmes and the 20% of the funding retained by the Commission, that enable a range of different types of project to be funded. The sub-programmes could including:
 - The type of activity that they would fund;
 - The organisation that would undertake that activity;
 - The objective of that activity, eg awareness raising or pilot project;
 - The complexity of the application process;
 - The degree of co-financing;
 - The absolute level of funding; and
 - The management structure.

In order to *recognise the importance of partnership building, awareness raising and the sharing of best practice, and the potential role of local authority networks*, the Commission should:

6. Recognise the potential value of networks and ensure that the existing networks and network organisations are utilised appropriately and encouraged to become more effective.
7. Consider setting up a sub-programme of LIFE+ that focuses on awareness raising. This sub-programme should allow for a high level of LIFE+ programme co-financing, and should be relatively simple in terms of management structure. This sub-programme could either be a part of the 80% of the funds distributed to Member States, in which case, national programmes would need to contain such a sub-programme, or part of the 20% of the funds retained by the Commission. In either case, Member States could usefully be required to ensure that the outputs of LIFE+ projects, with a potentially wide applicability, are disseminated, possibly via the DG Environment.
8. Require LIFE+ projects, which have the potential to be widely applicable, to include provisions for translation into other Community languages and possibly include a relevant local authority network as a partner to ensure that the outputs of the project are disseminated widely.

In order to ***engage those local authorities that are not yet politically committed*** to urban sustainable development and which do not currently access EU funds, the Commission should:

9. Allocate funds (from the 20% retained) to outreach activities to actively identify and engage such local authorities.
10. Consider setting up a focal point, eg agency or Clearing House, and a means of bringing such local authorities together with more experienced local authorities to enable them to learn how to access funds.

In order to ensure that the ***LIFE+ programme is effective in delivering inter alia urban sustainable development***, the urban unit should:

11. Recognise that LIFE+ is not the only funding programme that impacts on the urban environment and that it is important, therefore, to ensure that the objectives of other mechanisms, particularly the Structural Funds and FP6, are consistent with those of LIFE+ and DG Environment's urban environment policy, so that the former does not undermine the latter.
12. Engage with the units that manage LIFE+ and other relevant funds, eg Structural Funds, to ensure that these programmes can and do fund projects that contribute to the Commission's urban environment policy objectives, particularly those of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment.
13. Given the fact that there is now a gap between the end of funding under the Cooperation Framework and the potential funding of projects similar to those funded by the Cooperation Framework under the future LIFE+, the urban unit should engage with the relevant desk officers in DG Research and DG Regio to ensure that forthcoming relevant calls allow for the funding of such projects.
14. Allow for a relatively high level of Programme co-funding for projects that are mainly intended for awareness raising and the exchange of skills and

- knowledge in order to recognise the additional effort required to engage actors not yet linked to the debate.
15. Ensure that its stakeholders, including the networks, are aware of the potential for funding from these other mechanisms.
 16. Ensure that developments in relation to relevant funding mechanisms, eg LIFE+ and the structural funds, are communicated to stakeholders, especially local authorities, so that they can understand the implications of the measure.
 17. Give consideration to what happens to funding for urban environment projects between 2004 – when the Cooperation Framework ends – and 2007 – when LIFE+ is scheduled to begin.

Project proposals funded under LIFE+ should:

18. Include a proactive dissemination strategy, possibly including a network and provisions for translating the project's outputs
19. Include the potential for follow-up built in to the project, even if it is only focusing on awareness raising.
20. Include clear monitoring and reporting requirements based on an agreed range of comparable indicators that enable a clear assessment of the effectiveness of the projects. For awareness raising projects, this could include, for example, a requirement for beneficiary local authorities to report back on their experience with the project.

Finally, due to the issues raised in Section 1.5, in relation to undertaking ***assessments of similar funding mechanisms:***

21. When undertaking future evaluations, thought must be given to how best to evaluate a mechanism, such as the Cooperation Framework, which has a low profile, but is targeted at a specific stakeholder group.

Annexes

- I: Annexes relating to the Methodology
- II: Review of other relevant EU Policies and Funding Mechanisms
- III: Annexes relating to the Cooperation Framework and its Projects
- IV: Documents supporting the Assessment of the Projects funded under Part C of the Cooperation Framework (Part 2 of the research)

Annex I

Annexes relating to the Methodology

Contents:

- I.A: Matrix linking questions of ToR with methodological tools
- I.B: Questions used as the basis of the questionnaires and interviews (example)
- I.C: Information on the workshop

Annex I.A: Matrix linking questions of ToR with methodological tools

	Desk-based research							Questionnaires/interviews					Case studies			
Questions, set out by the Commission’s terms of reference, that the project should seek to answer	Review of EU policy evolution on urban env	Review of network/activity documentation	Assessment	Mapping			Identification of case studies to elaborate eggs	Questionnaire to Networks	Questionnaire to members	Interviews - Experts	Interviews - ‘Other’ local authority	Interviews – Activity proponents	Identification of – for elaboration			
	Relevance – Part 1															
An assessment of the relevance of the objectives undertaken by all the funded projects of local authorities towards the evolved needs and problems	•	•		•												
The structure and evolution of expenditure according to the objectives of the Decision	•	•														
	Relevance – Part 2															
An assessment of the relevance of the accompanying measures funded	•	•		•												
The structure and evolution of expenditure according to the objectives of the Decision	•	•														
	Relevance – Part 3															

An assessment of the Co-operation Framework as an instrument for improving urban sustainable development and the development of Local Agenda 21 on the one hand and for improving the implementation of good practices and the exchange of experiences at local level on the other in the context of EU Environmental Policy	•	•						•	•	•	•				
An analysis on the relationship and coherence with the existing sustainable development policy, the priorities and actions at European level and within the 6th Environmental Action Programme	•			•											
Effectiveness – Part 1															
An analysis of the outputs and results achieved compared to the initial objectives, as defined by the Decision and specified in the corresponding Guidelines for each call for proposals	•	•		•											
Detailed analysis of the changes that these activities have brought among the actors concerned.								•	•				•		
The effectiveness of the individual projects in terms of raising local awareness, consensus and partnership building and of mobilising all stakeholders concerned.								•	•				•		
The identification of the different ways to promote and improve partnership, exchanges of experiences and good practice								•	•				•		
The actual or foreseen positive environmental impact of the pilot projects		•						•	•				•		
The effectiveness of promoting the implementation of the environmental legislation at local level.								•	•	•	•				
Effectiveness – Part 2															

Analysis of the quality of the activities funded according to the respective terms of reference of the tenders		•														
The effectiveness of the activities funded for analysing and monitoring activities in the field of sustainable urban development and Local Agenda 21.				•							•					
	Effectiveness – Part 3															
An analysis of the outputs and results achieved compared to the initial objectives, as defined by the Decision and specified in the corresponding Guidelines for each call for proposals	•	•		•												
Detailed analysis of the changes that these activities have brought among the actors concerned								•	•				•			
The effectiveness of improving decision making at the local level in terms of setting priorities and integrating the environmental principles in the cities participating in the projects at European level.								•	•							
The effectiveness of supporting sustainable urban development at local level with a leverage effect among European local authorities.								•	•	•	•					
	Efficiency – Part 1															
Cost-effectiveness of the implemented projects		•	•													
Analysis of the Co-operation Framework, its activities and the projects funded in view to assess any possible overlapping with other activities funded by the Commission	•	•		•												

The performance of the financial and technical management (including external consultancy) of the projects including the decision making process and the dissemination of results among the participants as well as an analysis of the working methods and the main documents or working documents they use (questionnaires, surveys, etc)		•	•						•	•						
Analysis of the concrete deliverables issued from the projects		•														
	Efficiency – Part 2															
Cost-effectiveness of the activities funded		•	•													
Analysis of the Co-operation Framework, its activities and the projects funded in view to assess any possible overlapping with other activities funded by the Commission	•	•		•												
	Efficiency – Part 3															
Analysis of the Co-operation Framework, its activities and the projects funded in view to assess any possible overlapping with other activities funded by the Commission	•	•		•												
	Community-added Value (Utility and Viability)															
Identification and analysis of the benefits stemming from EU action that would not otherwise have been achieved, or to a lesser extent if these projects had been undertaken solely at national or local level.																
	Community-added Value – Part 1															

Identification of new projects issued without Community funding can be identified as being the result of the Co-operation Framework activities (including dissemination)								•	•	•	•		•			
Would the financing of projects have been more efficient if undertaken through different mechanisms?	•	•		•				•	•	•						
Has the net-working process led to significant changes in the local authorities concerned as, for example, in the financing methods, the decision making process, the communication methods, etc?								•	•				•			
	Community-added Value – Part 2															
Would the activities funded have been more useful if undertaken at another level?	•	•											•			
	Community-added Value – Part 3															
Is the role played by the EU Commission in the launching and monitoring of the projects worthwhile in terms of improving the implementation of environmental policy at the local level and in promoting urban sustainable development?								•	•	•	•					
Is the Co-operation Framework a useful contribution or complement to other Community programmes dealing with the Environment (LIFE, INTERREG, specific axes and measures of the Structural Funds, Cohesion Funds related to the Environment, the BEI instrument for Environment etc.)?	•							•	•	•	•					
How more efficient could this mechanism have been?								•	•	•	•					

Annex I.B:
Questions used as the basis of the questionnaires and interviews (example)

**Mid-term Evaluation of the Cooperation Framework to Promote Urban Sustainable
Development**

Questionnaire for Co-ordinators

Introduction

In 2001, the Decision on a Community Framework for co-operation to promote sustainable urban development (Decision 1411/2001/EC) came into force. The aim was to provide a legal base for European Commission funding of projects that promote urban sustainable development. It covered the period from 2001 to 2004 with the intention that it would legitimise, consolidate and extend EU activities in relation to the urban environment. The Decision is referred in a number of ways, including the:

- Co-operation Framework;
- Urban legal base; and
- Sustainable Cities Fund.

The Institute for European Environmental Policy is currently undertaking a mid-term evaluation of the Cooperation Framework for the Commission. This questionnaire is an important part of this process. As co-ordinator of one of the projects funded under the Framework we are keen to seek your views on the Commission's approach to the urban environment, in general, and the Cooperation Framework and its projects and activities in particular.

This questionnaire could either be filled in by yourself, or be used as the basis of an interview, as agreed with '*insert name of evaluation team responsible for undertaking the evaluation*'.

Name: _____

Organisation: _____

Country: _____

Objectives	
1. What was the original rationale for setting up ' <i>enter project name</i> '	Please explain:
2. Do you feel the original objectives of ' <i>enter project name</i> ' are still relevant today in addressing the needs and problems faced by local authorities?	Please explain:
Par	
3. How did you select 'partners' to join ' <i>enter project name</i> '?	Please explain:
4. To what extent did you involve partners in the development of ' <i>enter project name</i> '? At what stage of the project development did this occur and in what way did they contribute?	Please explain:
Members	
5. To what extent did you involve the members of ' <i>enter network name</i> ' in the development of ' <i>enter project name</i> '? At what stage of the project did this occur and in what way did they contribute?	Please explain:
6. <i>How do you disseminate project outputs to members?</i> For example, bi-monthly report, email digest, annual seminar etc	Please explain:
7. <i>Which methods of communication with your members do you feel have been most effective?</i>	Please explain:
8. Are you aware of any informal exchanging of information between your members as a result of ' <i>enter project name</i> '?	Please explain:
9. Are you aware of any informal exchanging of information between your members and other non-member local authorities?	Please explain:
Operational Management of '<i>enter project name</i>'	
10. How do you monitor whether the objectives of the project are being achieved?	Please explain:
11. How do you monitor the impact of the project?	Please explain:
12. Have you adapted the way the project operates as a result of your findings relating to the above?	Please explain:

13. Have you changed any management practices in the course of the project? If so, could you explain what, how and why?	Please explain:
Project Outcomes	
14a. Are you aware of any initiatives implemented by members of ' <i>enter network name</i> ' as a result of the ' <i>enter project name</i> '?	Please explain:
14b. If 'Yes', what have been the environmental impacts of this? If the measure is not yet fully implemented or are set to be implemented soon please give details of the expected impact	Please explain:
15. Are you aware of any changes in local authorities' internal practices or approaches to policy development, as a result of the ' <i>enter project name</i> '? Eg in relation to the integration of environmental principles in policy making or the prioritisation of your problems? Or in implementing environmental legislation?	If 'Yes', please give details:
16. Are you aware of any changes in local authorities' practices, in relation to engaging other stakeholders, as a result of the ' <i>enter project name</i> '? Eg in relation to how you build and mobilise partnerships? Or raising local awareness of urban issues?	If 'Yes', please give details:
17. Are you aware of any new projects that have been developed and funded as a result of ' <i>enter project name</i> '?	
18. What do you perceive to be the benefits of ' <i>enter project name</i> ' in relation to promoting urban sustainable development?	Please explain:
19. Would ' <i>enter project name</i> ' have been able to take place with Cooperation Framework funding? If 'yes', in what form would this have been?	Please explain:
The Cooperation Framework	
20. Do you feel that the Cooperation Framework, as an instrument, is relevant in addressing the needs and problems faced by local authorities?	Please explain:

<p>21. Do you think that the Framework is an effective way of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Developing Local Agenda 21? b) Improving the local implementation of environmental policy? c) Promoting urban sustainable development? d) Exchanging good practice 	Please explain
<p>22. Broadly speaking, what benefits has the Cooperation Framework brought to the promotion of urban sustainable development?</p> <p>E.g. project funding over a longer period, More communication from the Commission, Different funding criteria.</p>	Please explain:
<p>23. Do you have any views on how the Cooperation Framework could have been improved?</p>	Please explain:
<p>24. Do you have any other comments on the Cooperation Framework, generally?</p>	Please explain:
Commission's Role	
<p>25. What are your views on the Commission's management of '<i>enter project name</i>'?</p> <p>How, if at all, has this changed over time?</p>	Please explain:
<p>26. What are your views on the Commission's management of the Cooperation Framework more generally?</p>	Please explain:
<p>27. Do you feel that the objectives in respect of the annual calls for proposals from the Commission are relevant to the challenges of urban sustainable development?</p>	Please explain:
<p>28. Has the relevance of the calls changed over time?</p>	Please explain:
<p>29. How could the Commission have managed the Framework better?</p>	Please explain:
The Commission's Future Approach to promoting urban sustainable development	
<p>30. Do you believe that the requirement that Cooperation Framework projects include a network has been beneficial? Could the networks have been used more effectively?</p>	Please explain:
<p>31. Do you have views on the relevance of using networks (in general) to help deal with the problems and needs of local authorities?</p>	Please explain:
<p>32a. Do you think the funding of projects such as those we have been discussing is the best way that the Commission can contribute</p>	Please explain:

to urban sustainable development?	
32b. In what ways could the Commission's approach have been more effective?	Please explain:
33. Are there any other ways in which the Commission could contribute to the promotion of urban sustainable development?	Please explain:
34a. In the future, projects such as those funded under the Cooperation Framework, would be funded under LIFE. Do you think there will be any implications for funding such projects as a result of this change?	Please explain:
34b. Are there any particular issues that the Commission needs to address?	Please explain:

Annex I.C: Information on the Workshop

The workshop was held on Friday 22 April in Brussels. Its objective, title and format were agreed in advance with the urban unit of DG Environment and the project's Steering Committee. The objective of the workshop was to explore ways in which funding can be organised under LIFE+ to best deliver the various aspects of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, with a particular reference on the role of networks. The workshop was also used to explore, validate and develop the project's draft conclusions and recommendations.

The title of the workshop was '*How can LIFE+ deliver the objectives of the TS on the urban environment?*' and its agenda is shown in Box I.C.1 and the attendees are listed in Box I.C.2.

Box I.C.1: Agenda of the Workshop

An introduction to LIFE+
(Philip Owen, Head of DG Environment's Financial Services Unit and future Head of the LIFE Unit)

An update on the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment
(Chantal Bruetschy, Head of DG Environment's Urban Unit)

Lessons from the Mid-term Assessment of the Cooperation Framework
(Ian Skinner, IEEP)

Other approaches to funding in the EU
(David Wilkinson, IEEP)

Discussion

- Philip Owen (Head of Unit of the Financial Service)
- Mercedes Barat (ENV D4)
- Francis Rademaker (Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling)
- Pirita Lindholm (CEMR)
- Philippe Chamaret (Charge de Mission Risques Industriels Les Eco Maires)
- Alenka Burja (Ministry of Environment, Slovenia)
- Björn van Stayen (Leefmilieu en Infrastructuur, Flanders region, Belgium)
- Chantal Bruetschy (Head of Unit, ENV D4)
- Eva Banos (Eurocities)
- Ulrike Janssen (Climate Alliance)
- Yvonne Rydin (LSE)
- Liz Mills (Consultant)
- Ian Skinner (IEEP)
- Peter Hjerp (IEEP)
- David Wilkinson (IEEP)

Annex II

Review of other relevant EU Policies and Funding Mechanisms

Contents:

- II.A: Review of relevant EU policies
- II.B: Assessment of the overlap of the Commission's other funding mechanisms with the Cooperation Framework

Annex II.A: Review of relevant EU policies

Objectives of Urban Sustainability policy

This Annex reviews the policy documents of importance at EU level in relation to urban sustainable development and partnership building. Table II.1 outlines the policy dossiers used to provide the policy context and legal base for the Cooperation Framework Decision 1411/2001. Table II.2 outlines dossiers that illustrate thinking on urban sustainable development and partnership building, contemporary with the development of the Cooperation Framework Decision. Important dossiers issued after the Decision, which have influenced the subsequent calls for proposals are detailed in Table II.3. Included is a short summary on each dossier's key aims and objectives in relation to urban sustainable development. Highlighted in bold are elements which are specifically related/of interest in the context of evaluating the Cooperation Framework.

Table II.1 - Policy documents referenced in Decision 1411/2001 that provide justification for its priorities.

Sustainable development and environmental policy	Urban Sustainable Development	Partnership and Awareness in Local Authorities
EU Treaty – provides for the development and implementation of a Community environmental policy and sets out the objectives and principles, which should guide policy.	COM(1998)605 - Communication on ‘sustainable urban development in the European Union: a framework for action’ from 28 October 1998	Committee of the Regions opinion on transfrontier and transnational cooperation between local authorities - 1999/C 51/05
Decision No 2179/1998 - review of the European Community programme of policy and action in relation to the environment and sustainable development "Towards sustainability"	European Parliament Resolutions on strengthening EU sustainable development policy – A4-0247/99, A4-0177/98, A4-0172/98	Fifth Environmental Action Programme - all players should take action to act in partnership, to achieve sustainable development and share expertise
	Committee of the Regions opinion on ‘Towards an urban agenda in the EU’ - 98/C 251/04	Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 – adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio

Table II.2 – Table outlining measures and resolutions issued prior to the development of the Cooperation Framework Decision, illustrating the policy setting into which the Decision was introduced.

Date	Policy Measure	Objectives in relation to Urban Sustainable Development
6 May 97	COM(1997)197 – Communication ‘towards an Urban Agenda in the European Union’	<p>The Communication is split into several sections the first looking at the challenges facing European cities, the second outlining existing EU policy and the third the direction for future actions. The Communication sets the framework for EU action on urban issues stating that it is essential to engage at all levels (starting from the district up to the European) within a framework of interlinking relationships and shared responsibility and achieve better policy integration. The EU should play a complementary role in addressing urban issues as it has responsibility for policies in a number of sectors which have a direct bearing on the development and quality of life in urban areas. Possibilities for adapting these policies to improve their contribution to urban development need to be more exhaustively explored. Actions at EU suggested include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of clear targets for improvement of the urban environment with specified timescales, and the improvement of EU sectoral policies from the viewpoint of sustainability. This may involve the development of voluntary tools for urban planning aimed at sustainable development; • the development of the TETNs in particular to ensure efficient access to the networks from regional and local systems, • the reinforcement of intermodal freight and passenger transport, • the targeting of RTD activities on the main problems facing the cities of tomorrow, namely integrated transport, energy, sustainable construction technology, information networks, technology for the protection of cultural heritage, urban sustainable development, environmental technologies and new urban vehicles, as presented in the key action “The city of tomorrow” in the Commission’s formal proposal for the Vth Framework-Programme. • Adapting the use of structural funds • Raising knowledge and awareness – states that the Commission should intensify its efforts for the exchange of experiences between transnational cities, with the objective of collecting and compiling all relevant experience in urban regeneration and sustainable urban development.
17 May 97	Fifth Environmental Action Programme - Towards Sustainability: A European Community programme of policy and action in relation to the environment and sustainable development	All players should take action to act in partnership, to achieve sustainable development and share expertise
2 July 98	European Parliament Resolutions - A4-0177/98 – on strengthening EU urban environmental policy	Calls on the Commission to produce more and better information on the state of Europe’s urban environment and ensure its widespread dissemination; promote awareness raising and education and development of local agenda 21 ; support the group of experts on the urban environment; produce an urban environment programme aimed at sustainable development; ensure that resources are available for the development of a partnership approach to urban environment policy in particular in the framework of EU structural assistance; continued support for sustainable cities campaign and other collaborative and information systems such as collaborative information schemes on good practice.
2 July 98	European Parliament Resolutions - A4-0172/98 – on	Considers that cities have a vital role to play in developing and discussing environmental policies at national, Community and extra-

	Communication ‘Towards an urban agenda in the EU’	Community levels and for the Commission to support cities’ efforts to promote sustainable development strategies. Believes the Commission should – include sustainability as an integral part of urban policy and add it to the list of network support; devise and develop comparable sustainability indicators and implement a sustainability audit scheme; give greater support to LA 21 activities and consider a separate budget line for these activities; promote the exchange of experiences ; continue provision of financial assistance to promote appropriate network activities.
28 Oct 98	COM(1998)605 - Communication on ‘sustainable urban development in the European Union: a framework for action’	Four policy aims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening economic prosperity and employment in towns and cities – looking at development of an urban dimension of employment policies, strengthen the role of cities as centres for innovation and economic development. Promote transport strategies that reduce traffic congestions and examine ways to improve the regulatory framework for domestic public transport • Promoting equality, social inclusion and regeneration in urban areas – cooperation against discrimination and exclusion. An area based approach to regeneration integrating economic, social, cultural, environmental, transport and security aspects • Protecting and improving the urban environment: towards local and global sustainability – draws together initiatives that affect the quality of the urban environment, including urban energy management, transport, waste, air quality, water, noise and contaminated land. Emphasis on integrated environmental management approaches. Stresses the need to extend eco labelling and eco management and audit schemes for environmental performance of private and public sector. Underlines importance of urban areas in context of climate protection • Contributing to good urban governance and local empowerment – Stronger policy integration between levels of government and policy sectors and for citizen empowerment and involvement. Awareness raising and capacity building measures and support innovative urban development strategies
22 Feb 99	Committee of the Regions opinion on cross border and transnational cooperation between local authorities - 1999/C 51/05	Through the Treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam the ongoing process of European integration has been extended to regions and local authorities. Cooperation implies Combining forces to achieve an objective, which is impossible or difficult to achieve separately There are problems besetting urban development and to address these issues there will need to be a further strengthening of the autonomy of local authorities, backed up by additional financial, administration and technical resources, and new models for sustainable development and transnational cooperation between local authorities, which may involve a problem solving and a learning process. The specifics of this are explained in more details in the Resolution.
4 May 99	European Parliament Resolutions - A4-0247/99 – on the Communication on sustainable urban development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomes the framework for action but regrets however, the lack of specific details. • Welcomes the opportunities for urban networking and cooperation proposed by the European Commission; asks the Commission to encourage also the involvement of townships with similar socio-economic and natural characteristics, and to support ‘stock exchanges’, ‘fair’ and permanent networks in which cities trade experiences. • Calls on the Council in the framework of the reform of the structural funds to ensure – participation of local actors, encouragement of an integration process, promotion of an integrated process aimed at favouring a synergy of urban and rural development, promotion of interregional and decentralised cooperation actions. • Calls on the Commission to revise the Trans-European Transport Networks policy, promote sustainable modes of transport, study

		<p>measures of a legal nature on land use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actions needed – Asks the Commission to launch an integrated urban policy; the adoption of an urban agenda; strengthen cooperation with local authorities in the cities where they are located with a view to encouraging sustainable urban policies; develop internal environmental auditing and to adopt a sustainable mobility plan.
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Table II.3– Table outlining measures issued after the Cooperation Framework Decision, demonstrating how policy thinking in relation to urban sustainable development has evolved since 2001.

Date	Policy Measure	Objectives in relation to Urban Sustainable Development
22 July 02	Sixth Environmental Action Programme – Decision 1600/2002	<p><i>Programme Aim</i> - contributing to a high level of quality of life and social well being for citizens by providing an environment where the level of pollution does not give rise to harmful effects on human health and the environment and by encouraging a sustainable urban development;</p> <p>Under Environment and Health and quality of life - Contributing to a better quality of life through an integrated approach concentrating on urban areas; Objective - urban environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a thematic strategy promoting an integrated horizontal approach across Community policies and improving the quality of urban environment, taking into account progress made in implementing the existing cooperation framework reviewing it where necessary, and addressing: • the promotion of Local Agenda 21; • the reduction of the link between economic growth and passenger transport demand; • the need for an increased share in public transport, rail, inland waterways, walking and cycling modes; • the need to tackle rising volumes of traffic and to bring about a significant decoupling of transport growth and GDP growth; • the need to promote the use of low emission vehicles in public transports; • the consideration of urban environment indicators.
11 Feb 02	Towards a Thematic Strategy on the urban environment – COM(2004)60	<p><i>Overall Aim</i> - To improve the environmental performance and quality of urban areas and to secure a healthy living environment for Europe's urban citizens, reinforcing the environmental contribution to sustainable urban development while taking into account the related economic and social issues.</p> <p><i>Priority Themes</i>: intended to fulfil the mandate set out in the 6EAP the urban Thematic Strategy will focus on four themes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sustainable Urban Management – Additional measures</i> – strategies for sustainable urban management, LA21 to be placed on a firmer and longer term basis, in the longer term need active and integrated management of environmental issues for the whole urban area including explicit environmental targets, actions and monitoring programmes that link environmental policies to economic and social policies, therefore municipalities need to put in place an environmental management plan and adopt an appropriate environmental management system – <i>Action proposed</i> – each capital city and every city and town of over 100,000 inhabitants should adopt an environmental management plan • <i>Sustainable Urban Transport</i> – towns and cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants should each prepare, adopt and implement a sustainable urban transport plan – The Commission is preparing a Directive focussing on the procurement of low energy and low emission road vehicles by public authorities, action plan to promote the market development of alternative fuels, develop and expand CIVITAS, Commission should identify a basic set of sustainable urban transport indicators, promote initiatives eg car free day and develop transport related expertise in the 250 or more local and regional Energy agencies and other agencies in Europe to support the implementation of sustainable urban transport. • <i>Sustainable construction</i> – extend energy performance Directive to

		<p>progressively to smaller buildings, methodology for evaluating the overall sustainability of buildings and the built environment including life cycle cost indicators, Commission to propose non energy related environmental performance requirements for buildings, Member States to develop national sustainable construction programmes and high performance requirements based on EU standards, Member States, Local Authorities etc to encourage the use of sustainability requirements in their own tendering procedures for buildings and construction work, Commission to explore options for training, guidance, exchange of experience and further research, develop environmental labelling for construction materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sustainable Urban Design</i> – Member States to ensure that land use planning achieve sustainable urban settlement patterns and take into account environmental risks; incentivise reuse of brown field sites; set targets for brownfield site usage; set minimum land use densities; evaluate development in the context of climate change consequences. The Commission is to: prepare work on spatial planning rules and definitions and guidelines; explore opportunities for training and exchange of experiences and further research on urban design. The EEA will continue to monitor land use • Supporting the mainstreaming of good practice at local level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Commission to propose changes to the Community framework for co-operation to promote sustainable urban development; explore ways of improving dissemination of urban research results to towns and cities; and examine ways in which it can support the development of an Aalborg +10 initiative. • <i>Integration</i> – within community policy – Commission to consider how training and education policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - within community environmental policy – specifically in relation to water, climate change, air pollution, waste, nature and biodiversity and pesticides. - between different levels of administration vertically ie Member States, local/regional level and internationally.
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Annex II.B Assessment of the overlap of the Commission's other funding mechanisms with the Cooperation Framework

Project	Funding Period	Purpose	Types of Projects Funded	Overlap with Cooperation Framework
URBAN Community Initiative aka URBAN I and II	1994-1999 (I) and 2000-2006 (II)	A European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme aimed at setting up an integrated approach to tackle the high concentration of social, environmental and economic problems increasingly present in urban agglomerations.	Mixture of infrastructure projects and financial support to schemes, eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A concentrated clean air programme and environmental clean-up of companies in scattered locations. ▪ The creation of the "Oversee Park", the building of a bridge for pedestrians. ▪ Financial support for employment creation in environmental projects. 	The programme funds projects that construct new infrastructure or test new technologies through pilot projects, so no overlap with the Cooperation Framework. However, some cities in the projects funded under URBAN are also members of networks in projects funded under the Cooperation Framework.
URBACT	2000-2008	Offshoot of URBAN I and URBAN II that set up a network of local authorities which suffer certain levels of deprivation. The network allows exchange of information about their experiences from those who have received funding from the URBAN I and II programme.	Funds the network, working groups, seminars.	Although it funds a network, this focuses specifically on disadvantaged communities that have been involved in projects funded under URBAN, so there is no real crossover.
Urban Audit	2002- 2005	A DG Regional Policy and Eurostat initiative that follows on from the URBAN AUDIT pilot project (1997- 2000). Allows mayors and other locally elected officials to compare their city directly with other cities in Europe, this is done through the collection of information on the living conditions in 258 large and medium-sized cities within the European Union and the candidate	Funds collection and presentation of data.	It is focused on data collection and presentation, so there is no overlap with the Cooperation Framework. However, again, some of the cities involved are also members of networks involved in projects funded under the Cooperation Framework

		countries		
City of Tomorrow and Cultural Heritage	1998-2002	<p>DG RESEARCH programme to support research in four main areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ City planning and management ▪ Cultural heritage ▪ Built environment, and ▪ Urban transport <p>In particular it seeks to give funding where action is urgently required, and where there is untapped technological potential and strong demand for new solutions from cities themselves.</p>	<p>Seeks to fund projects that will ensure rapid, EU-wide take-up of practical new approaches to urban governance, planning and management. It is expected to produce, within a decade, measurable advances in economic development, environmental performance and quality of life</p> <p>Example projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Production of a European waste manual for building construction ▪ Research on how to promote walking in cities 	<p>As the main objective is to deliver measurable activities the majority of funding is given to infrastructure projects and pilot projects testing new technologies. However, the use of networks is also encouraged as a means to share best practice and information exchange. Accordingly, as the Cities programme does fund networks and also deals with urban issues such as sustainable transport, there is some possibility of crossover.</p>
INTERREG III	Application period runs from 2002-2006	<p>INTERREG III has three strands:</p> <p>a) cross border co-operation: focused on the local dimension at the internal and external dimension. To develop economic and social centres and joint spatial development approaches</p> <p>b) transnational co-operation: with a view to promoting wider European integration and sustainable and balanced development in the EU</p> <p>c) interregional co-operation: to</p>	<p>INTERREG IIIc, arguably potentially the strand most relevant to the Cooperation Framework, does fund networks, one of which is Energie Cities (between April 2004 and March 2007), which is <i>also funded under Co-operation Framework</i>. In addition, IIIc has six foci, one of which is urban.</p> <p>Examples of networks funded in the urban theme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RUSE, which is managed by Energie Cities. This aims at ‘redirecting urban areas development towards sustainable energy’ by improving capacity building in collective structures (city networks, 	<p>One of the main objectives of INTERREG IIIc is to facilitate best practice and information sharing through the use of networks, one of the themes it focuses on is ‘urban’ related. Hence, the potential for some crossover is apparent, and some networks are funded under both the Cooperation Framework and INTERREG.</p>

		<p>improve the effectiveness of regional development tools through the creation of networks.</p> <p>The overall aim is to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies and instruments through large-scale information exchange and sharing of experience (networks) in a structured way.</p>	<p>agencies) and individual bodies (municipalities).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habiforum Expertisenetwerk Meervoudig Ruimtegebruik, which deals with multifunctional intensive land use in cities, looking at how to achieve this in a sustainable manner. 	
LIFE	<p>1992-1995 (first phase)</p> <p>1996-1999 (second phase)</p> <p>2000-2004 (LIFE III)</p> <p>2005 –2006 (extension of LIFE III)</p>	<p>A DG Environment programme, LIFE co-finances environmental initiatives in the European Union and certain third countries bordering on the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea and in central and east European accession candidate countries.</p> <p>One of the main objectives of LIFE is to help contribute towards the implementation, development and enhancement of the Community environmental policy and legislation. It also attempts to help integrate the environment into other EU policies.</p>	<p>Funds both rural and urban environmentally related projects. These are a mixture of infrastructure projects and financial support to schemes, eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SALSA (Sustainable Access to Leisure Sites and Amenities) – this project constructed four routes linking the targeted leisure facilities and residential areas to encourage walking and cycling to the site (UK) ▪ Env Management for local land use planning. This included the introduction of an environmental management system for four municipalities in the Lake Constance region (Germany) ▪ A demonstration model which integrates environmental considerations in sustainable land use planning and management through the use of ecological networks. 	<p>In line with its objectives, LIFE funds a mixture of environmentally related projects, a number of which are urban related. Although the majority of funds given are to support infrastructure of pilot projects some funding is also given to networks. Hence, the potential for some crossover is apparent. However, in practice this is not likely to be that great because the majority of projects tend to be large-scale infrastructure ones.</p>
CIVITAS	2000 -	<p>CIVITAS is a major urban transport initiative supporting demonstration projects in a number of laboratory cities across Europe.</p>	<p>Mixture of infrastructure projects and financial support to schemes, eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Car share scheme in Aalborg 	<p>Although CIVITAS covers urban transport issues the types of projects it funds tend to be those which entail new infrastructure or the testing of</p>

		Projects under CIVITAS are: Vivaldi, Tellus, Trendsetter and Miracles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Curbside-doorstep delivery in Rome ▪ Biodiesel bus fleet in Graz 	new pilot projects, so no obvious overlap. It is clear however that the involvement of some cities in this project are also members of networks in projects under the Cooperation Framework.
EPOMM	2001-	EPOMM is an international partnership of 7 EU member States aiming to promote and further develop (the concept of) Mobility Management in Europe and to exchange experiences between countries in Europe, in order to optimise the implementation of mobility management and provide support to countries implementing mobility management.	A website, bi-monthly electronic newsletter, a annual conference, workshops and seminars.	Yes, some cross over in terms of issues covered as it deals with urban transport issues; furthermore it is a network. Moreover it has links to a number of networks which are funded under the Cooperation Framework, such as EuroCities, Energie Cities and Climate Alliance. It also has links to CIVITAS. However, it does not fund any actual projects, and so there is no overlap in terms of what is actually funded.
ESPON (European Spatial Planning Observation Network)	2000-2006	Part of INTERREG IIIB, ESPON seeks to study the spatial dimension of economic and social cohesion policy and other EU policies in view of ensuring better co-ordination of decisions which have an impact on spatial planning. The programme has five main priorities: -Thematic projects -Policy impact projects -Co-ordinating and spatial cross-thematic projects	Funds networks. These must include research institutes from at least three countries and is to be led by a Lead Partner. Topics covered by projects range from urban to rural issues, telecomm trends to transport policy impact.	Although ESPON is a network, it is for research institutes rather than local authorities, however urban issues are dealt with so some cross over could occur in relation to the issues dealt with.

		<p><i>-Scientific briefing and networking</i></p> <p>-Technical assistance</p>		
CONCERTO	2003-	Aims to demonstrate the high potential for reducing energy consumption and increasing the use of renewable energy through adoption of an integrated approach to energy policies.	Funds infrastructure and research projects put forward by a consortia of (for example) local and regional authorities, utilities, energy-service providers, energy agencies and technology providers,	The focus on energy policy means that there is no direct overlap with the sort of project and activity funded under the Cooperation Framework.
CUTE (Clean Urban Transport for Europe)	2003-	Demonstration project to support a number of cities to introduce hydrogen into their public transport fleet	Infrastructure – covers cost of hydrogen buses and hydrogen filling stations.	It is focused on transport infrastructure, therefore it is not especially urban-focused, nor does it fund networks or projects, so there is no overlap.
INTERACT	2002-	INTERACT seeks to build on the experience and lessons of INTERREG I and INTERREG II, through providing for exchange of experiences and networking, information dissemination and support to those involved in managing INTERREG III programmes,	Information and communication networks in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decentralised network of five INTERACT Points located throughout Europe supports the Secretariat • a transnational Monitoring and Steering Committee supervises the quality and effectiveness of the INTERACT Programme implementation 	INTERACT does fund networks, however the objective of these is to disseminate best practice and information sharing that has occurred from INTERREG projects. Therefore, whilst INTERREG does fund some urban projects it is unlikely that there is any crossover here.

Annex III

Annexes relating to the Cooperation Framework and its Projects

Contents

- III.A: Summary of Decision 1411/2001 that established the Cooperation Framework
- III.B Analysis of the Cooperation Framework Calls for Proposal
- III.C: Detailed Information on Projects funded under Parts A and B of the Cooperation Framework in 2001 to 2003

Annex III.A:
Summary of Decision 1411/2001 that established the Cooperation Framework

Article 1 establishes the Cooperation Framework ‘to provide financial and technical support to networks of local authorities organised in at least four Member States’ (and accession countries, as set out in **Article 8**) to encourage ‘the conception, exchange and implementation of good practices’ in:

- ‘implementation at local level of EU environmental legislation;
- sustainable urban development,
- Local Agenda 21.’

The main partners are identified as the ‘Commission, networks of local authorities, organised urban multi-stakeholders, community networks such as NGOs, universities and other actors, organised at European level.’

Article 2 states that the types of eligible activities are listed in an Annex, which also sets out the indicative breakdown of financial support between the activities, as follows:

- A: Exchanges of information among areas where environmental problems occur alongside socio-economic problems (40%).
- B: Co-operation between European level partners (40%).
- C: Accompanying measures: reports, analytical reviews, monitoring etc. (20%).

Support is eligible for up to three years, starting in the year to which the support relates. For Part C activities, support may be given to ‘other beneficiaries’ besides established networks.

Articles 3 and 4 state that the Commission will assess and select proposals based on priority themes and that it will publish these in the Official Journal by the end of January each year. The Commission will decide by the end of May which projects it is to finance and make a list of these publicly available.

Article 5 requires that the Commission ensures ‘consistency, complementarity and synergy’ between the Cooperation Framework projects/activities and other Community programmes (in particular URBAN). It also states that projects receiving funds from other Community programmes shall not be eligible to receive funds from the Cooperation Framework.

Article 6 states that funding period begins in 2001 and ends in 2004 and that the total amount of money available for the whole period is €14 million.

Article 7 sets out the criteria against which projects will be selected, including: sound cost-benefit ratio; a lasting multiplier effect at European level; effective and balanced cooperation among the various partners; share of financial participation; transfrontier co-operation; a multi-sectoral approach contributing to sustainable urban

development; the degree of involvement of all partners (including representatives of civil society); and contributing to the strengthening and revitalising public services.

Article 9 places requirements on the Commission to ensure the success of the activities, including verifying that the activities have taken place, on the spot checks and a requirement on recipients to keep relevant documentation.

Article 10 requires beneficiaries to submit to the Commission annual progress reports for contracts of more than one year and a financial report for each contract within six months of its completion, and lays down the conditions under which the Commission may cancel a contract.

Article 11 sets up the advisory committee, while Article 12 requires that the implementation of the Cooperation Framework be assessed by the Commission by 31 March 2003.

For full text of the Decision, see:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2001/l_191/l_19120010713en00010005.pdf

Annex III.B:
Analysis of the Cooperation Framework Calls for Proposal

This Annex analyses four calls for proposals issued under the Cooperation Framework from 2001 to 2004. The analysis outlines the budget allocated to each call, the themes on which applicants should focus, the policy dossiers whose influence can be seen in the content of the calls and analytical comments on the calls content.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Priority Themes</i>	<i>Reference to Policy?</i>	<i>Comments</i>
2001	€2.5 million – does not state the percentage it will fund just says a percentage of total eligible expenditure	The following types of activity were to be funded under the 2001 call: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on sustainable urban development and Local Agenda 21; and Cooperation between the players concerned by sustainable development and Agenda 21 at European level 	Decision 1411/2001	This call is very vague and refers back to the Annex of Decision 1411/2001
2002	€2.3 million with up to 95% of eligible costs.	<p>General Issues Financial assistance would be supplied for: Encouraging the conception, exchange and implementation of good practices in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local level implementation of EU legislation; Sustainable urban development Local agenda 21 <p>Priority Themes These are split into Part A and B – as defined in Annex A of Decision 1411/2001 Part A – inter-exchange of information on sustainable urban development and local agenda 21 and improvements in environmental quality in areas where environmental problems occur alongside socio-economic problems Part B – cooperation between partners concerned with sustainable development and Agenda 21 at European level</p> <p>There are four categories of project that the call states it will support, linked to policy developed namely the Thematic Strategy. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> how to overcome barrier to creating sustainable urban transport systems sustainable development of local economies including mechanisms to decouple transport and economic growth how to overcome barriers to effective sustainable urban management gaps in the policy framework at EU and national level including the development and implementation of effective tools to monitor the quality of urban environments and the impact on their wider natural support systems, in particular indicators <p>Projects will not be funded on the subjects funded in 2001</p>	Quotes the 3 priorities from Decision 1411/2001 States that projects should support current policy work in particular the Urban Environment Thematic Strategy	Very similar to the 2003 call although point 4 is elaborated in 2003
2003	€3.2million	General Themes are repeated in 2003 call as they were in	Urban	Categories are very broad

and up to 95% funding	<p>2002. Priority Themes as in 2002 these are split into Part A and Part B.</p> <p>Call categories are linked to policy development namely the development of the Urban Environment Thematic Strategy. There are 6 categories of projects considered of particular interest –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. tackling barriers to effective implementation of sustainable urban transport solutions 2. sustainable development of local economies esp decoupling of transport growth from economic growth 3. tackling barriers inhibiting sustainable management of towns and cities 4. implementing sustainable urban design measures 5. implementing sustainable construction measures 6. evaluating the impact of methods and tools to monitor the quality of urban environments and the cumulative impacts of towns and cities on their wider natural support system through eg environmental performance audits or benchmarking actions <p>In addition (as it comments this is exclusive from projects supporting the Thematic Strategy) projects that facilitate dialogue, coordination and exchange of information between networks of local authorities esp. projects that foster and improve the implementation of the Aalborg charter and can demonstrate effective improvements in sustainable planning and managements through eg benchmarking were considered – only one project would be funded under this section</p> <p>In order to allow funding of a cross section of projects and issues proposals on the same themes as in 2002 would not be accepted.</p>	<p>Environment Thematic Strategy figures strongly Quotes the 3 priorities from Decision 1411/2001</p>	<p>therefore at a generic level link to the TS – don't link to specific actions in the TS just the generalised categories.</p> <p>Priorities 1, 2 and 3 are identical to those in the 2002 call</p> <p>Comments 4, 5 and 6 are similar to some made in the 2002 call, but have been made far more explicit in the 2003 call, probably following the publication of the towards a thematic strategy paper.</p> <p>Is the vagueness an indication that they were looking to justify the use of money for the funding of the Urban Thematic Strategy working groups?? as the wording is slightly odd.</p> <p>Point 6 is very similar to that in 2002 but the emphasis has changed from indicators to benchmarking and performance audits</p> <p>The emphasis on Aalborg is new from 2002 and is one of the few priorities to consider networks specifically in as oppose to a policy issue</p>
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Annex III.C:
Detailed Information on Projects funded under Parts A and B of the
Cooperation Framework in 2001 to 2003

Projects funded in 2001
CAMPAIGN
<p>Finishing date: 31 September 2003 (24 month contract)</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support those cities and towns in implementing the Aalborg Charter, Lisbon Action Plan and Hannover Call. • Facilitate information exchanges and networking to help develop policy, planning, management, measuring and monitoring tools. It is envisaged that these can help foster local capacity building for sustainable development. • Co-operate with networks and organizations that have influence on urban development in Europe, particularly in relation to sustainable development. • Promote and support local action in European, national and sub-national sustainable development policies. • Increase level of awareness of local sustainable development, and actively promote citizen participation. • Provide input and put into practice EU policies for sustainable development, in particular the Cooperation Framework. <p>Expenditure: 1 364 398 € (92.5% EU funding)</p>
RESOURCITIES
<p>Finishing date: 30 September 2003 (3 month extension on 18 month contract)</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of local and regional authorities (LRA) (and general public) on the relations between current ways of life and the consumption of natural resources beyond the growing urban waste production • Raise awareness of LRA on their potential contribution in moving towards sustainable consumption through waste prevention and recycling • Use WEEE as an example of waste prevention at source. <p>Expenditure:</p> <p>Provisional: €459,240 Actual: €539,630.76 (78% EU funding)</p>
Projects funded in 2002
PHASE
<p>Finishing date: 30 March 2005 (three month extension on original 24 month contract)</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop health impact assessment (HIA) toolkit for European cities. • To develop a resource pack for European cities and towns on integrating health and social aspects into sustainable development. • To mobilise national networks of health cities to support the further integration of health and social

aspects.

- Promote synergies and put health and social exclusion high on the agenda.

Expenditure: 512 255 € (EU finding 93.76%)

DISPLAY

Finishing date: 30 June 2005 (30 months)

Objectives:

- Voluntary initiative with a focus on enlarging the environmental aspects of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive
- Developing a display label of Co2 emissions and energy consumption relative to municipal buildings
- Implementing the display label in 100 municipalities
- Organising a communication campaign
- Improving communication between local authorities and the general public and encourage initiatives from citizens.

Expenditure: €438,379 (90% EU funding)

MIRIAD 21

Finishing date: 30 October 2005 (36 months)

Objectives:

- Diffusion and exchange of information on sustainable development and the local Agenda 21 regarding major industrial risks;
- Exchange of experience and expertise so as to reinforce industrial risks prevention (improve life quality and regarding health and environment);
- Better implementation of the directives Seveso II and IPPC;
- Implementation of the Aarhus Convention;
- Better matching and knowledge between different levels of competences and responsibilities;

Particular objectives:

- Cast out what can be sustainable development of the local authorities involved regarding the risks prevention and consequences on urban planning and ground (territory) developments;
- Involve the populations in their own safety;
- Concretely implementing Agenda 21, adding major industrial risks.

Expenditure: €795,700.25 (87% funded by the EU)

SIPTRAM

Finishing date: 30 April 2005 (30 months)

Objectives:

- To encourage cities across Europe to improve the environmental and social standards through competitive tendering of urban public transport policies
- Trigger exchange on good practices between local politicians and technical experts in public transport
- Explore, how a dialogue between procurers, suppliers, manufacturers and regulators can lead to mutual increase both in environmental and social standards as well as in the cost- effectiveness and quality of public urban transport.
- Enhance commitment of local authorities and other actors to high quality and sustainable public

transport, therefore strengthening political objectives in the course of public transport tendering

Expenditure: €602,676 (83% funding from the EU)

EMAS PEER REVIEW

Finishing date: 30 November 2004 (24 months)

Objectives:

- Support sustainable urban management in European cities
- Start and extend the use of EMAS in selected units of 16 local authorities, with special emphasis on accession countries (8 cities from accession countries)
- Make EMAS more feasible to implement in cities by developing EMAS guidance and toolkit for local authorities
- Develop and apply in practice EMAS Peer Review method to lower the threshold for implementing EMAS in local authorities
- Provide feed-back to the Commission on the potential of EMAS in implementing the thematic strategies
- Raise awareness of EMAS among European Cities and responsible bodies in national administration

Expenditure: €590,058 with in kind contribution €714 778 € (90.8% of funding from EU)

Projects funded in 2003

AALBORG +10

Finishing date: 31 October 2004 (17 month contract)

Objectives:

- To organise a high profile conference to promote local sustainable development.
- Prepare the Aalborg Commitments, a set of shared sustainable development related commitments to be implemented by local governments across Europe.
- To provide the European Commission with information to help develop their policy, in particular the Thematic Strategy on Urban Environment.

Expenditure: 1 037 274 € (EU funding 43% of the total funding)

QUICKSTART

Finishing date: 31 March 2006 (30 months)

Objectives:

- Contribute to climate change policy and mitigate urban impact on the global climate
- Strengthen institutional capacity in local authorities to address climate protection in a comprehensive and strategic way
- Inform, activate and support local authorities
- Build capacity and expertise on strategic approaches to local climate change policy within institutions and experts that offer advice to local authorities
- Contribute to community sustainability and enhance common liveability.

Expenditure: €459 875 (85% EU funding)

Annex IV

Documents supporting the Assessment of the Projects funded under Part C of the Cooperation Framework (Part 2 of the research)

Contents

- IV.A Summary and assessment of activities funded under Part C of the Cooperation Framework

Annex IV.A Summary and assessment of activities funded under Part C of the Cooperation Framework

<i>Number/Title</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Lead organisation (plus partners and other people involved, eg 'experts')</i>	<i>Budget (€)</i> <i>i) requested</i> <i>ii) used</i> <i>iii) total (including source of any other funds)</i>	<i>Assessment:</i> <i>i) Relevance</i> <i>ii) Effectiveness in developing LA 21, promoting implementation of environmental legislation, locally;</i> <i>iii) Efficiency/cost-effectiveness; and</i> <i>iv) Community-added value (utility and viability)</i>
Activities funded in 2001						
1. Conference on Sustainable Urban Development, held in Barcelona	Reimbursement of experts	To bring together potential beneficiaries of the Cooperation Framework to provide an opportunity to discuss their potential contribution, how to respond to the opportunities it offers and to help forge partnerships etc.	Two day conference in Barcelona	The City of Barcelona and the Province of Catalonia. Around 20 experts involved, including representatives of the networks whose projects eventually benefited from the funding under the Cooperation Framework, as well as some cities that were also involved in these projects, and academics.	i) €20,000 ii) €14,927 iii) €14,927	<p>i) Directly relevant to Cooperation Framework as brought together potential beneficiaries and aimed to secure a smooth implementation of the instrument.</p> <p>ii) Activity remote from actual practice, so unlikely to be effective, directly at least, in, eg, promoting LA21</p> <p>iii) Outcome – the holding of a conference – achieved (2-3.5.2003), travel reimbursements paid amount to less than €1,000 per expert so apparently efficient</p> <p>iv) As activity focused on an EU-level instrument, unlikely to be funded – or have been more useful – if undertaken at another level.</p>
2. European Common Indicators (ECI)	Fund the translation of the ECI methodology	To translate the ECI methodology sheets into the EU languages	Translations of the methodology	Different small contracts with different contractors	i) €35,200 ii) €24,014 iii) €24,014	<p>i) Relevant to the Decision as the latter supports the development of the ECI</p> <p>ii) Activity remote from practice, but</p>

	into all EU(-15) languages					<p>could be useful for local authorities in relation to implementing, eg, LA 21.</p> <p>iii) Outputs achieved – translations available on the ECI web page; average cost per translation – 2 400€ appears reasonable</p> <p>iv) There is the possibility that funding for this activity could have been found at another level, but the process would probably have taken longer, in general, and possibly resulted in an inconsistent approach being taken across Member States.</p>
Activities funded in 2002						
3. Ecological Footprint	Development of the 11th ECI – Ecological Footprint and preparing a test phase where approximately 5 local authorities in Europe will test the methodology	To finalise the Ecological Footprint as an indicator for local sustainability	<p>1) Methodology finalisation and documentation to allow test phase of 5 local authorities to use the footprint.</p> <p>2) Eurostat data research to provide baseline data for test countries.</p> <p>3) Development of a standardised questionnaire for gathering regional consumption data.</p> <p>4) Make the Ecological Footprint calculations simple and transparent a spreadsheet will be developed and pre-loaded with national data sets from the pilot</p>	<p>Contract with Best Foot Forward, also involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WNRI – Norway • Lund University – Sweden • Redefining Progress – USA • Van Hall Institute/De Kline Aarde – Holland • Ambiente Italia • Maija Hakenen – Finland 	<p>i) €21,850 ii) €21,850 iii) €21,850</p>	<p>i) Relevant to the Decision, as latter supports ECI development</p> <p>ii) Project involved local authorities, and aimed to be useable for others, so has the potential to be effective in longer-term.</p> <p>iii) Outputs achieved, and cost does not appear to be excessive for such a project.</p> <p>iv) Implemented in a number of local authorities in Europe as part of ECI project. As with Activity 2, above, probably could have been funded at another level, but probably more efficient to have done it at the European level.</p>

			local authorities.			
4. URBAN LEGAL BASE - BUREAU DE LIAISON BRUXELLES-EUROPE	Meeting with Eurocities and the Bureau Liaison Bruxelles, on 12 June 2002	No information	No information	Eurocities and the Bureau Liaison Bruxelles	i) €710 ii) €710 iii) €710	i) Name of meeting refers to ‘urban legal base’, which is another name for the Cooperation Framework, so appears to be relevant ii) Not enough information to assess effectiveness iii) A small amount of money, but not enough info to assess what it covered. v) Seems likely that such a small amount of money could have been found from other sources.
5. Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign at Johannesburg	Project to promote regional variations of the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign.	To share the experiences of regional Agenda 21 in Europe to the rest of the world.	Internet based report/presentation and a written summary report that will be made available as a CD Rom	Contract with City of Hannover	i) €87,390 ii) €87,225 iii) €87,225 In addition, €21,140 was provided by Hannover and there was €29,500 in in-kind contributions. The budget: Personnel costs: €21,240 Travel/subsistence: €21,400 Printing, translation and publication: €43,890€	i) Appears relevant, as it focuses on the implementation of LA21, but focus is on disseminating the information outside of the EU, so direct relevance to Cooperation Framework, questionable ii) Activity remote from practice, so not directly effective, but has the potential to be in the longer-term iii) The project achieved what it set out to do. Given the objectives of the project, the costs do not seem to be excessive. iv) As it funded a European network, unlikely that the activity would have been funded at another level.

					Sub-contracting: €15,000 Indirect costs: €7,100	
Activities funded in 2003						
6. Working Group on Sustainable Urban Construction	Project to manage working group and support chair, prepare reports of meetings and minutes, to reimburse attendance of experts	To contribute to the development of the Commission's Thematic Strategy on the Urban environment, in particular the aspects of urban construction.	Arrange a working group and produce a report of the group's considerations.	Contract with Architects Council of Europe	i) €44,300 ii) €44,300 iii) €44,300 Budget: Coordination: €4,000 Report/minutes: €14,000 Experts travel and subsistence €24,000 Meetings/Catering €800 Technical costs €1,500	i) Relevant to the Decision and especially the call, which for 2003 was more focused towards the Urban Thematic Strategy ii) Project remote from practice, but as it supports the TSUE, it should, in the long-run, be effective in helping local authorities become more sustainable. iii) Group supported and report produced, so achieved what it set out to do. Budget does not seem to be excessive for the project. iv) As the activity supported an EU-level process, it is unlikely that it would have been more useful if undertaken or funded at another level.
7. Working Group on Sustainable Urban Transport	To manage working group and support chair, to prepare reports of meetings and minutes.	To contribute to the development of the Commission's Thematic Strategy on the Urban environment, in particular looking at the following topics: - a reduction of the link between	Prepare a report of the working group's considerations.	Contract with RAND Europe	i) €31,890 ii) €31,890 iii) €31,890 The budget: Preparing reports: €17,910 Organising workshops: €10,430 Desk research:	i) Relevant to the call and especially the Decision. ii) Project remote from practice, but as it supports the TSUE, it should, in the long-run, be effective in helping local authorities become more sustainable. iii) Organised four workshops and produced the required reports (Final report available at:

		<p>economic growth and passenger transport demand;</p> <p>-the need for an increased share in public transport, rail, inland waterways, walking and cycling modes;</p> <p>-the need to tackle rising volumes of traffic and to bring about a significant decoupling of transport growth and GDP growth; and the need to promote the use of low emission vehicles in public transport.</p>			€3,350	<p>http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/pdf/0401_finalreport_transp ort.pdf). All the deliverables were met. The budget is comparable to the other projects supporting Working Groups.</p> <p>iv) Unlikely that the activities funded would have been more useful undertaken on another level.</p>
8. Working Group on Sustainable Urban Management	To manage working group and support chair, to prepare reports of meetings and minutes, to reimburse attendance of experts (this is ok as it is an administrative arrangement).	To gain independent and expert input into the development of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. The targets of the working group is to define major gaps and weaknesses in the management procedures of urban systems, with focus on environmental and health protection and to propose tools and	Final report and the organisation of the third EWG workshop	Administrative Arrangement with JRC	<p>i) €30,000</p> <p>ii) €30,000</p> <p>iii) €30,000</p> <p>Budget: Organisation of the third EWG Workshop in Ispra (travel/per diem costs for 10 experts (€8,000) and additional costs for logistics (lunch, transport and others) (€2,000):</p>	<p>i) Relevant to the call and especially the Decision.</p> <p>ii) Project remote from practice, but as it supports the TSUE, it should, in the long-run, be effective in helping local authorities become more sustainable.</p> <p>iii) The third workshop organised and the required reports produced (the final report is available at http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/pdf/0401_finalreport.pdf). Consequently all deliverables were met. The budget is comparable to the other projects supporting Working Groups.</p>

		strategies for an improved sustainable management of European urban areas. Feeds into the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment.			€10,000 Mission cost (finalise the reports collecting inputs): €4,000 Technical support (writing and printing of reports, desk-studies with external consultant, purchase of data and statistical material): €16,000	iv) Unlikely that the activities funded would have been more useful undertaken on another level.
9. Stakeholder Platform Coordinator – NGO Sector	To undertake consultation exercise and workshop to collect views of NGOs for Thematic Strategy. This will include 25 selected stakeholders from representative NGO groups.	To ensure representative views from the NGO sector across Europe are included in the development of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment.	1) Draft Stakeholder Consultation Report. 2) Stakeholder Consultation Report. 3) List of 16 representatives to attend the Platform event 4) Presentation to the Platform of key messages from consultation exercise 5) Post Platform Reaction Report	Contract with European Environment Bureau	i) €13,500 ii) €13,500 iii) €13,500 The budget: Coordinator salary: €7,925 Research assistant: €975 Organisation of pre-meeting: €4,600	i) Relevant to the call and especially the Decision. ii) Project remote from practice, but as it supports the TSUE, it should, in the long-run, be effective in helping local authorities become more sustainable. iii) The Stakeholder Consultation Report (available at http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/pdf/ngo_report.pdf) and the presentation of key messages from the consultation exercise were achieved. The Budget seems realistic compared to the other stakeholder platform projects. iv) Unlikely that the activities funded would have been more useful undertaken on another level.

10. U.W.E – ASSISTING THE EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE URBAN TRANSPORT (Stakeholder Platform Coordinator – Academic Sector)	To undertake consultation exercise and workshop to collect views of academic community NGOs for Thematic Strategy	To gain a representative view of academic community to ensure their views are included in the development of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment.	<p>1) List of 25 academic representatives to attend the Stakeholder Platform to be delivered.</p> <p>2) Stakeholder Consultation report</p> <p>3) Post Platform reaction report – three weeks after conclusions of the Platform</p>	Contract with European Urban Research Association (via UWE)	<p>i) €13,500 ii) €13,293 iii) €13,293</p> <p>Budget: Draft stakeholder report: €2,240 Stakeholder consultation report: €2,799 Post platform Reaction Report: €1,121 Flights and accommodation: €414 Payments to the EURA Executive Committee: €6,719</p>	<p>i) Relevant to the call and especially the Decision.</p> <p>ii) Project remote from practice, but as it supports the TSUE, it should, in the long-run, be effective in helping local authorities become more sustainable.</p> <p>iii) Stakeholders were selected for the event and the summary report, collating the information from the consultation, was produced (The summary report is available at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/pdf/academic_report.pdf). The budget seems realistic compared to the other stakeholder platform projects.</p> <p>iv) Unlikely that the activities funded would have been more useful undertaken on another level.</p>
11. Stakeholder Platform Coordinator – Business Sector	To undertake consultation exercise and workshop to collect views of business community for Thematic Strategy	To collect representative views from the business sector and insure they are included in the development of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment	<p>1) Draft Stakeholder Consultation Report</p> <p>2) Stakeholder Consultation Report</p> <p>3) List of 16 representatives to attend Platform event</p> <p>4) Presentation to the Platform of key messages from consultation</p>	Contract with Eurochambres	<p>i) €13,500 ii) €13,500 iii) €13,500</p> <p>The budget: Coordination and management (22 days for advisor and 4 days for deputy secretary general): €8,840</p>	<p>i) Relevant to the call and especially the Decision.</p> <p>ii) Project remote from practice, but as it supports the TSUE, it should, in the long-run, be effective in helping local authorities become more sustainable.</p> <p>iii) Stakeholders were selected for the event and the summary report, collating the information from the consultation, was produced (The report is available at:</p>

			5) Post Platform Reaction Report		Administrative Assistance (8 days): €1,660 Overheads: €3,000	http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/pdf/business_report.pdf . The budget seems realistic compared to the other stakeholder platform projects iv) Unlikely that the activities funded would have been more useful undertaken on another level.
12. Stakeholder Platform at Metropole Hotel – Event Organisation	To prepare 4 position papers from different stakeholder groups, organise and run the 2 day event and workshops, prepare reports of each workshop and an overall report of findings and recommendations	To inform and facilitate the preparation of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment through four priority areas for improvement (climate change, nature and biodiversity, environment and health and natural resources and waste)	1) Stakeholder position paper reports 2) Event/workshops organisation 3) Overall report	Contract with Land Use Consultants	i) €61,573 ii) €61,573 iii) €61,573 The budget: Land Use Consultants time inputs: €35,723 Venue, Equipment and refreshments: €20,000 Travel and incidental expenses: €5,850	i) Relevant to the call and especially the Decision. ii) Project remote from practice, but as it supports the TSUE, it should, in the long-run, be effective in helping local authorities become more sustainable. iii) The deliverables of four workshop session reports, the stakeholder platform meeting and report were met. The budget does not seem excessive. iv) Unlikely that the activities funded would have been more useful undertaken on another level.
13. Candidate Country Study	To prepare a study on the situation in the Candidate Countries with regard to the 4 priority themes of the Thematic Strategy, to	To ensure that the Thematic Strategy properly reflects the situation in the Candidate Countries.	1) 12 Candidate Country Overview Reports 2) Initial Analysis Report 3) Final Analysis Report	Contract with European Academy of the Urban Environment	i) €44,675 ii) €44,675 iii) €44,675 Final payment pending The budget: Candidate country	i) Relevant to the call and especially the Decision. ii) Project remote from practice, but as it supports the TSUE, it should, in the long-run, be effective in helping local authorities in the former candidate countries to become more sustainable.

	<p>assess whether the interim reports and final reports of the 4 working groups adequately reflect the needs of the Candidate Countries, to collect good practice examples from the Candidate Countries.</p>				<p>Overview Reports: €20,290 Initial/Final Analysis Report: €17,245 Project Assistance: €4,400 Travel & Subsistence: €1,440 Overhead: €1300</p>	<p>The twelve candidate country report are available at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/pdf/initial_overview_reports.pdf</p> <p>The final analysis report is available at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/pdf/interim_reports_analysis.pdf</p> <p>All the deliverables were met and the budget does not seem to be excessive.</p> <p>iv) Unlikely that the activities funded would have been more useful undertaken on another level.</p>
<p>14. Commitment for meetings June 2003 to December 2003 – Part C</p>	<p>Formal financial Commitment to use Part C funds to reimburse attendance of experts at various meetings during the latter half of 2003 (stakeholder platform at Metropole hotel, transport working group).</p>	<p>Consultation events on the development of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder Platform Consultation (23/24 June 2003) Independent Experts' Workshops (16 June, 7/8 July and) 23 September 	<p>Following the opinion from ENVAC on 27 March, F2 advised that reimbursement of travel expenses and per diem payments could be made under the usual conditions directly from the legal base. Based on email from Marco Panigalli (ENV) to Simon Goss (ENV).</p>	<p>i) €145,000 ii) €144 093 iii) €144 093</p> <p>The budget: Meeting 16 June (10 experts): €10,000 Meeting 23-24 June (105 experts): €112,875 Meeting 7-8 July: €11,218 Meeting 23 September: €10,000</p>	<p>i) The email (Panigalli to Goss) states that “it is understood that this group is preparing a report on recommendations of measures that the Community should implement in the field of sustainable urban transport. I hereby confirm that it is therefore possible, under the terms of Annex C of Regulation 1411/2001/EC, that you can refund the travel costs of the participants (under the usual conditions) directly from budget line B4-305 “Community framework for co-operation to promote sustainable urban development””.</p> <p>ii) The stakeholder platform consultation and the expert workshops were held. All the deliverables were met.</p>

						<p>iii) Project remote from practice, but as it supports the TSUE, it should, in the long-run, be effective in helping local authorities become more sustainable.</p> <p>iv) Unlikely that the activities funded would have been more useful undertaken on another level.</p>
15. Fedenature Contract	Small ad hoc research project from 2002 but payments fall into 2003 due to administrative problems	<p>To make a table of values for peri-urban natural spaces and classify their typology.:</p> <p>-To formulate recommendations for an improved evaluation of these spaces.</p> <p>- The aim of this work remains a modest one; It is a first contribution to the subject, based on a study with numerous parks and exchanges between the members of this network.</p>		Contract with Fedenature	<p>i) €12,820€ ii) €12,820€ iii) €12,820€</p> <p>Final payment pending</p> <p>Coordination: €1,920 € Redaction: €5,920 Mise en forme: €1,200 Frais: €1 200 European experts: €2,560</p>	<p>i) Relevant to the call and especially the Decision.</p> <p>ii) Could be a source of information and indirectly effective for implementing LA21.</p> <p>iii) All the deliverables were met (the report is available at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/pdf/report_en.pdf)</p> <p>iv) Seems to be the right level of funding</p>

MID-TERM ASSESSMENT OF THE CO-OPERATION FRAMEWORK TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT (Decision 1411/2001/EC)

Summary table for assessing the quality of work (Source – Evaluating EU Activities – a practical guide for the Commission Services – November 2003)

As regards this criterion, the evaluation report is:	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
1. Meeting needs: Does the evaluation deal adequately with requests for information from the Commission and is it in line with the specifications?			yes		
2. Relevant scope: Have the rationale of the intervention, its outcomes, outputs, impacts, interactions with other policies and unexpected effects been studied in full?			yes		
3. Appropriate methodology: Is the design of the evaluation adequate and suitable for providing the findings required (within time limits) to answer the main evaluation questions?				yes	
4. Reliable data: Are the primary and secondary data collected or selected suitable? Are they sufficiently reliable in the light of the expected use?			yes		
5. Sound analysis: Does the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data comply with established rules, and is it complete and appropriate for answering the evaluation questions correctly?				yes	
6. Credible results: Are the results logical and justified by the analysis of the data and by interpretations based on carefully presented explanatory hypotheses?			yes		
7. Valuable conclusions: Are the conclusions just, and are they unbiased by personal or partisan considerations?				yes	
8. Useful recommendations: Are the recommendations comprehensible, useful, applicable and detailed enough to be put into practical effect?				yes	
9. Clarity: Does the report describe the context and goal of the intervention evaluated and also the organisation and results in such a way that the information provided is easily understood?				yes	
Bearing in mind the specific constraints imposed on this evaluation by the background, the evaluation report is considered to be				yes	

COMMENTS ON ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF WORK AND ITS FINDINGS:

1. Meeting needs: Does the evaluation deal adequately with requests for information from the Commission and is it in line with the specifications?
<i>Yes. It has to be taken into account that because of the characteristics of the programme (broad geographic scope and high number of partners) it was a difficult task</i>
2. Relevant scope: Have the rationale of the intervention, its outcomes, outputs, impacts, interactions with other policies and unexpected effects been studied in full?
<i>Yes, although the Decision establishing the programme did not foresee an assessment based in the usual analysis and quantification of inputs, outputs and results</i>
3. Appropriate methodology: Is the design of the evaluation adequate and suitable for providing the findings required (within time limits) to answer the main evaluation questions?
<i>Yes, the methodology has been cleared conceived and applied, adapted to the needs and the available data. The performance of the consultants team has been professional, very active and open-minded to the evolving needs of the assessment</i>
4. Reliable data: Are the primary and secondary data collected or selected suitable? Are they sufficiently reliable in the light of the expected use?
<i>Yes, the consultants have done the best they could do with the available data</i>
5. Sound analysis: Does the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data comply with established rules, and is it complete and appropriate for answering the evaluation questions correctly?
<i>The “soft” nature of the programme (exchange of experience among local authorities through established networks) makes difficult to assess the quantitative data. From a qualitative point of view, the analysis is useful to the EC needs</i>
6. Credible results: Are the results logical and justified by the analysis of the data and by interpretations based on carefully presented explanatory hypotheses?
<i>Yes, although the main results will be only able to be assessed at long term</i>
7. Valuable conclusions: Are the conclusions just, and are they unbiased by personal or partisan considerations?
<i>Yes. The lack of sufficient information on LIFE+ did not permit to go any further. On the other side, the fact that the new ENV financial instrument has taken the name of a well-known programme leads to some misunderstanding about the nature of future calls of proposals and procedures to follow.</i>
8. Useful recommendations: Are the recommendations comprehensible, useful, applicable and detailed enough to be put into practical effect?
<i>Yes, but these recommendations have to be analysed in the light of the EC priorities, the financial perspectives and the policy priorities of DG ENV</i>
9. Clarity: Does the report describe the context and goal of the intervention evaluated and also the organisation and results in such a way that the information provided is easily understood?
<i>Yes. The report has been written in a clear and understandable way</i>
Bearing in mind the specific constraints imposed on this evaluation by the background, the evaluation report is considered to be
<i>Good.</i>