

Transformative innovation in action

23rd Annual Forum of the World Alliance for Low Carbon Cities

September 19th - 21st 2023

Vaasa, Finland

The “Transformative innovation in action” Forum, the 23rd World Alliance for Low Carbon Cities Forum, emphasizes international collaboration in the spirit of the EU missions and accelerates the co-implementation of the twin green & digital transition. The Forum is hosted in Vaasa, the Nordic energy capital and a forerunner in decarbonization. By working together with leading green tech companies such as ABB and Wärtsilä, Vaasa has become a leading energy innovation hub.

Transformative innovation calls for collaboration involving missions, policymakers, innovation agencies, regions, cities, researchers, and industry. This year’s Forum brings these perspectives together to better understand the dynamics of multi-level governance and the means of engaging industry in joint efforts, anchoring the discussions in practical experiences.

A feature of particular interest in Vaasa as an innovation hub is the Aurora Botnia ferry. The first day of the Forum is hosted aboard the Aurora Botnia ferry, the world’s most environmentally friendly passenger and car ferry which operates daily, between Vaasa and Umeå, and functions as a research laboratory for companies in Finland and Sweden. The second day of the Forum is held at one of Ostrobothnia’s most inspiring venues, the Wasa Innovation Center.



Wärtsilä
Sustainable Technology Hub

The STH is a new integrated center of research, product development and production located in Vaskiluoto, Vaasa. STH is the latest tangible step in Wärtsilä’s path to drive decarbonization and an ecosystem of collaboration, functioning locally and globally.



ABB
Energy Efficiency Movement

ABB launched the Energy Efficiency Movement to bring together all stakeholders to innovate and act for a more energy-efficient, regenerative, adaptive world. ABB believes that, together, we can make a real difference if that’s how we decide to use our power.

This year’s Forum is co-created with



WALCC
World Alliance for Low Carbon Cities



Vaasan yliopisto
UNIVERSITY OF VAASA



Regional Council
of Ostrobothnia

V A A S A .
V A S A .

synocus



KVARKENRÅDET
MERENKURKUN
NEUVOSTO



MERINOVA
Technology Centre Vaasa

Overview of the forum program

Tuesday, 19.9.2023

Multi-level Governance with Industrial Engagement

Seminar on the Wasaline ferry Aurora Botnia



12:00 Registration and welcome at Wasaline ferry terminal

12:30-13:30 Welcome and opening words

Joakim Strand, Member of Parliament, Chair of the Vaasa City Council
Martin Meyer, Vice Rector, University of Vaasa
Peter Lindgren, Vice President System Drives, ABB & Vice Chair, World Alliance for Low Carbon Cities
Satu Sipola, Vice President, Hydrogen and Project Execution, Fortum
Kang Feiyu, Honorary Chair, World Alliance for Low Carbon Cities & Vice President, Graduate School at Shenzhen, Tsinghua University

13:30-14:15 Tour of Aurora Botnia ferry

14:15-15:15 **Multi-level Governance in Action**
panel discussion, moderated by **Taina Tukiainen**, Climate Adaptation Mission Board member, University of Vaasa

Elina Bardram/Irene Bonvissuto, EU Adaptation to Climate Change Mission
Wiebke Pankauke, EU Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission
Tomas Häyry, Mayor, City of Vaasa
Siret Talve, Scientific Adviser, Republic of Estonia ministry of Rural Affairs, Mission Board
Karim Selouane, Co-chair of the Global ABC Adaptation Working Group & CEO, Resalliance, France, Mission Board

15:15-15:30 Coffee break

15:30-16:30 **Engaging businesses in decarbonization collaboration**
panel discussion, moderated by **Aline de Santa Izabel**, Innovation Ecosystems & Partnerships, Compare Foundation, Sweden, EIC

Hannu Mäntymaa, Managing Director, Wärtsilä
Stefan Damlin, Managing Director, Vaasan Sähkö
Pekka Tiitinen, Managing Director, ABB Finland
Ulf-Erik Widd, Accounts & Ecosystems, Energy & Built Environment, Business Finland,

16:30-18:00 Networking

18:00-20:00 **Dinner on board**, greetings from co-organizers
Tomas Häyry, Mayor, City of Vaasa

21:15 Arrival in **Vaasa Harbor** and transport back to hotels



Wednesday, 20.9.2023

Driving Co-Implementation

Conference at the Wasa Innovation Center

08:00-08:30 Bus pick-up from hotels

08:30-09:00 Registration and Coffee at the Wasa Innovation Center

09:00-10:30 **Cities and regions as orchestrators**
expert panel followed by small group discussions, moderated by **Taina Tukiainen**, Research Director, University of Vaasa

Boosting Energy Transition,
Regional Innovation Valleys,
Viability Advantage
– How Vaasa and Espoo
simultaneously drive
decarbonization locally,
nationally and on EU level

Heidi Kuusniemi, Professor, University of Vaasa
Antti Ahlava, Professor, Aalto University
Barbara Widera, Wrocław University of Science and Technology, Faculty of Architecture, Mission Board
Tauno Kekäle, Project Manager, Merinova
Jakob Frants, Development Manager, Vaasan Sähkö
Jari Kuusisto, Project Manager, IoT for Smart Cities, Wapice

Round table discussions on the presented themes in small groups

10:30-10:45 Coffee break

10:45-12:15 **Intermediaries as orchestrators**
expert panel followed by small group discussions, moderated by **Fredrik Pressler**, CEO, Posintra

Increasing Company and
City Collaboration – Kilpilahti
and Baltic Sea Region
spearheading decarbonization
initiatives

Fredrick von Schoultz, Deputy Mayor, City of Porvoo
Esa Kokkonen, Director, Baltic Institute of Finland
Elsi Kauppinen, Policy Area Coordinator, EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region
Patrik Laxell, Associate Partner, Synocus

Round table discussions on the presented themes in small groups

12:15-13:00 Lunch

13:00-14:30 **Companies as orchestrators**
expert panel followed by small group discussions moderated by **Johan Wallin**, Managing Partner, Synocus

Designing Superblocks and
Energy Efficient Societies –
Lessons learned by Skanska,
Fortum and their partners
about their transformational
projects with cities such as
Tampere and Espoo

Toni Tuomola, District Manager, Skanska
Kari Lahti, General Manager, Fortum
Fredrik Jansson, Head of New Business, TietoEvry
Jukka Laitinen, Head of Product Innovation & Innovation Engineering, KONE
Kari Kankaala, Director of Climate & Environment, City of Tampere
Lauri Virtanen, Project Developer, Caruna
Markus Laine, Senior lecturer, Tampere University
Markku Markkula, Vice President, Committee of the Regions & President, Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council

Round table discussions on the presented themes in small groups

14:30-15:00 Coffee Break

15:00-15:30 **Operationalizing transformative innovation policies**
Discussion moderated by **Johan Wallin**, Managing Partner, Synocus & Honorary Chair, WALCC

15:30-16:00 **Reflections on the WALCC Vaasa Forum**

Markku Markkula, Vice-President, European Committee of the Regions & President, Helsinki-Uusimaa Region
Mats Brandt, Regional Mayor, Ostrobothnia Regional Council

16:00-16:30 WALCC 2024 Action Plan; discussion

16:30-17:00 WALCC annual meeting

Thursday, 21.9.2023

Vaasa as Forerunner

Site Visit Tour

08:30-09:00 Bus pick-up from hotels

09:00-10:00 Wärtsilä Sustainable Technology Hub

10:15-11:15 ABB Motors facility

11:30 **Lunch at Strampen**
Greetings from Merinova, leading actor in the EnergyVaasa cluster