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Research internship at Stockholm Environment Institute  
Renewable energy in production of heat and electricity in Sweden  
March – October 2015

First and foremost, I would like to thank all the members of the Sverker Åström Foundation for giving me the opportunity to conduct my research project in Sweden. I also can't help expressing my deepest gratitude to the President of the Foundation – Disa Håstad – who helped me with literally everything from applying for visa and securing accommodation to finding invaluable contacts, with who I could collaborate during my research.

I have always been interested in energy issues. However, as a Russian I mostly studied coal, oil and gas sectors, never thinking of renewables as an adequate substitute for fossil fuels. While preparing my grant application, I was browsing *sweden.se* website, when I learnt that more than 50% of the final energy consumption in Sweden was covered by renewable energy sources. I was astonished and asked myself “How was this possible to achieve?” and “What could other countries, including Russia, learn from the Swedish experience?”. In order to find answers to these questions, I spent six months working as a research intern at Stockholm Environment Institute<sup>1</sup> and travelling to renewable energy installations in different parts of Sweden with Professor Tomas Kåberger<sup>2</sup>. As an outcome, I wrote my Master's thesis, where I examined economic and political factors conducive to the Swedish transition towards clean energy and extracted lessons for other countries.

My stay in Sweden turned out to be a truly mind-boggling experience. Firstly, with my own eyes I saw that it is possible to abandon hydrocarbons and use cleaner energy sources, like biomass, waste, wind and solar energy, without detriment to the economic and social development of the country. I visited a plant that generates heat and electricity out of forest residues in Växjö, a solar panel installation on a hospital's rooftop in Härnösand and even made a trip on a public bus running just on electricity. Secondly, I met many amazing people in Sweden, conversations with who were very inspiring. Among them there were my internship supervisor Björn Nykvist and my colleagues at Stockholm Environment Institute, Professor Tomas Kåberger and the people I met during my travels

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<sup>1</sup> Stockholm Environment Institute is an independent international research institute with the headquarters in Stockholm. More at <http://www.sei-international.org/>

<sup>2</sup> Tomas Kåberger is the Professor of Industrial Energy Policy at Chalmers University Technology and former Director General of the Swedish Energy Agency.

around Sweden, and, of course, the members of the Sverker Åström Foundation. Finally, I experienced the incredible Swedish culture and traditions. My favourite one was definitely the “fika”.

Last but not least, my time in Sweden was not only full of discoveries concerning the energy sector and the Swedish culture. I also acquired a new hobby – photography. Below there is a short photo record of my fantastic six months in Sweden.



Stockholm's lights at night, March 2015



The Sakura cherry trees in bloom in Kungsträdgården, May 2015



The breathtaking view from Skinnarviksberget, June 2015



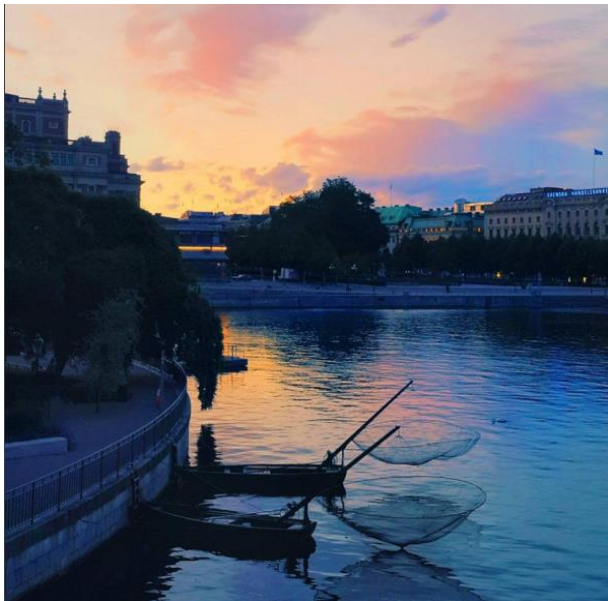
A seagull enjoying lunch at a Stockholm street café, August 2015



A girl under the rain in Östermalm, September 2015



Green buildings of Stockholm, October 2015



The unbelievable sunset near the Riksdag, June 2015



Selfie with the Speaker of the Riksdag, Urban Ahlin, March 2015