

April 2018

Cities and Climate Change Science Conference Helps Set Research Agenda

The CitiesIPCC Cities and Climate Change Science Conference, held in Edmonton, Canada, March 5-7, created enhanced understanding of the impacts of climate change at the urban level, the range of possible responses, and the role of cities in the implementation of the Paris Agreement and other international global agendas. The Conference was co-organized by UN-Habitat, UN Environment, Cities Alliance, C40, ICLEI, Future Earth, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the World Climate Research Programme, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, and United Cities and Local Governments.

Key partners working on cities and climate change have laid down the foundations for The Science We Need for the Cities We Want (<https://bit.ly/2Jn5wss>). The goal is better-informed city climate action and decision-making as a result of greater engagement between the policy, practice, and scientific communities working in urban areas.



UN-Habitat representative Filippe Decorte gave speech on enabling transformative climate actions in cities during a plenary session at CitiesIPCC.
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The main outcome of the Conference is a global research agenda on cities and climate change that advances climate change science and gives recognition and visibility to the knowledge generated by urban actors. UN-Habitat contributed to substantive conversations on the interlinkages between sustainable urbanization, development and climate change, and how to build

more sustainable cities in the future. UN-Habitat also turned the spotlight on the topic of climate action in informal settlements and economies and on incremental mainstreaming, rather than marginalizing informal settlements; planning as an instrument of power, because of the implications of planning for various communities; and social mobilization for confrontation and collaboration.

New Phase of EC-Funded Urban Low Emission Development Strategies Project Gets Underway

National governments need strategic and cost-effective ways to deliver on and increase the ambition of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Integrating subnational levels of governments into action on climate change is an attractive option; one that should increase the likelihood and success rate of policy delivery and implementation.

In order to support this process, as well as local level climate planning, UN-Habitat is delighted to be implementing a second phase of the project called "Accelerating climate action through the promotion of Urban Low Emission Development Strategies", or "Urban-LEDS II" in partnership with ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability. The

project is funded by the European Commission from 2017 – 2021 and builds on a first phase that ran from 2012 – 2015 (www.urban-leds.org).

The project aims to develop and strengthen the implementation of Low Emission Development (LED) strategies at the sub-national level and promote multi-level governance

New Phase of EC-Funded Urban Low Emission Development Strategies Project Gets Underway (continued)

to this end. The project focuses on the following:

- Developing and approving Urban LEDS and action plans in eight new model cities in Colombia, Bangladesh, Lao PDR and Rwanda;
- Developing a network of learning cities in the four new countries, engaged through staff training and peer-to-peer exchange;
- Supporting eight Phase I model cities in Brazil, India, Indonesia and South Africa to develop prioritized pilot projects and finance models for LEDS implementation;
- Enhancing vertical and national integration of climate action in support of national and local strategies and policies under the framework of the Paris Agreement;
- Promoting international, regional and national state and city cooperation on urban climate action.

The per capita emissions of the new project countries, particularly the Least Developed Countries of Rwanda, Lao PDR and Bangladesh, are very low. The focus is not on achieving reductions in emissions (“mitigation”) but avoiding large future increases in emissions. Economic decisions taken today, especially those related to infrastructure, will influence the nature of the development pathways in these countries. The prize is to achieve high levels of human



Solar PV installation at a community centre in South Africa during phase 1 of the project. © Grace Stead

development while maintaining a low emissions profile; increasing economic competitiveness in a carbon-constrained future.

Successes so far include initial scoping visits and stakeholder consultation in Colombia, Lao PDR and Rwanda. Participating local governments will be announced shortly following a rigorous selection exercise. A first priority in many countries will be the implementation of pilot demonstration projects; designed to showcase the potential of low emission development to local citizens and politicians and galvanize action for the rest of the project.

UN-Habitat is delighted to be leading on the project’s work on

multi-level governance. Together with ICLEI, we are undertaking a study in all eight project countries, analyzing the current state of multi-level governance for climate action, and identifying opportunities for enhancements. The plan is to share the results of these studies during domestic Talanoa Dialogues, and globally in a synthesis report released in time for COP-24 in December 2018.

To follow progress of the project, or to enquire about partnership opportunities, check www.urban-leds.org, or email steven.bland@un.org.

Planning Associations Launch “Planners for Climate Action” At COP-23

On 11 November 2017 in Bonn, at the 23rd Conference of Parties (COP-23) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), associations of planning professionals and planning educators launched “Planners for Climate Action” (P4CA).

The representatives of an impressive array of planning associations were on hand in Bonn to launch this initiative. They included leaders of associations from the global level such as the International Society of City and Regional Planners, and



UN-Habitat Executive Director, colleagues and leaders of planning associations at the launch of “Planners for Climate Action” initiative. © UN-Habitat

Planning Associations Launch “Planners for Climate Action” at COP-23 (continued)

the Global Planning Education Association Network. The regional level was also well represented, by the Commonwealth Association of Planners, the association from Francophonie (APERAU), and associations covering Europe (AESOP), Latin America (ALEUP), and Australia and New Zealand (ANZAPS). Finally representatives of the national planning associations of the two largest emitting countries also participated: the American Planning Association (in person), and the Urban Planning Society of China (via video). Collectively these organizations represent tens of thousands of planners.

UN-Habitat spearheaded the formative of this cooperative initiative. On the one hand we observed a growing recognition (e.g.,

in Sustainable Development Goal Target 11.b) that urban and regional planning offered a core set of tools to accelerate climate action in cities. But on the other hand we noted that planners were “conspicuous in their absence” from UNFCCC processes. No existing cooperative ‘city’ initiatives such as the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy had a clear role for planners. As UN-Habitat began to test the waters in mid-2017, we encountered a very strong interest on the part of the planning associations in forming a new initiative to fill this gap. This led to the launch of “Planners for Climate Action”.

Since then P4CA has not stood still. The group held a first closed-door organizational meeting in Bonn following the public launch, and then

a second work planning meeting at the 9th World Urban Forum in February 2018 in Kuala Lumpur. Activities under discussion for 2018 are: (i) mapping what associations are currently undertaking to promote strengthened climate action planning, (ii) establishing a repository of syllabi for mainstreaming climate considerations into urban/regional planning curricula, and (iii) registering as a formal “cooperative initiative” as part of the UNFCCC’s Marrakesh Partnership for Climate Action.

For further information on Planners for Climate Action, please write to: steven.bland@un.org.

V-LED Project Promotes Multi-level Governance for Climate Change Actions

The Vertical Integration and Learning for Low Emission Development (V-LED) Project, which is implemented by UN-Habitat together with adelphi research and with the support of the International Climate Initiative of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building, and Nuclear Safety, continues to support the governments of the Philippines and Vietnam to promote effective multi-level governance for climate change actions.

V-LED in the Philippines successfully advocated for the integration of climate change adaptation and mitigation in key local government unit (LGU) plans by using the local climate change action plan (LCCAP) formulation process as entry point. UN-Habitat assisted the Department of Interior and Local Government-Local Government Academy in developing the Enhanced LCCAP Guidebook 3, which introduced the concept of mitigation and provided guidance in developing local low emission development strategies. A total of 328 LCCAP coaches from state universities and colleges, learning



V-LED experiences were shared during UN Development Account and V-LED project co-organised workshop on “Enhancing National Urban Policies and Vertical Integration: Governance, Capacities, Finance for Local Climate Action” at the 9th World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in February 2018. © Bernhard Barth, UN-Habitat

research institutions, and local and national governments were trained on the Enhanced LCCAP Guidebook 3 and were expected to help technical staff of 1,710 LGUs in formulating their LCCAPs.

“Given the multi-sectoral nature of climate change, the LCCAP formulation process can be used to

strengthen the coordination among and between LGUs and national government agencies, and thus promote the participatory approach to local climate action planning,” said Climate Change Commission (CCC) Secretary Emmanuel De Guzman at the opening of a recent training event.

V-LED Project Promotes Multi-level Governance for Climate Change Actions (continued)

V-LED Philippines also promoted peer-to-peer learning through a series of good practice exchanges on greenhouse gas data collection and management for the 23 local government units of Cavite and Negros Oriental Provinces. This was implemented to support the CCC's program for LGUs in developing GHG inventories and management plans.

In Vietnam, V-LED conducted a Good Practice Exchange on "Technological solutions in promoting low emission development and urban resilience for 3 Cities" that facilitated the sharing of applied concepts and technologies that may be used to support local climate actions. Through the learnings from said activity, Can Tho City has adopted and applied an underground rainwater harvesting tank development shared by Daiken company.

V-LED Vietnam likewise conducted dialogue events on "Integrating Technological Innovation in Urban Policy towards Low Emission Development and Urban Resilience" and "Enhancing Low Emission Development Approaches in Urban Sector" to build the capacity of national and local authorities as they pursue and promote climate resilient low-emission development. These events were organized through partnerships with the Department of Climate Change, Ministry of Consultation, and Ministry of Science and Technology.

The V-LED experiences from the Philippines and Vietnam were shared for mutual learning and exchange on how vertical coordination and cooperation can foster local climate action and sustainable urbanization during the regional workshop on

"Enhancing National Urban Policies and Vertical Integration: Governance, Capacities, Finance for Local Climate Action". It was organized by the V-LED Project and the UN-Development Account in the run-up to the World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It was attended by 53 participants from 15 countries including: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Germany, India, Myanmar, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Kingdom, and Vietnam.

ABOUT US

Headquartered at UN-Habitat in Nairobi, the Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI) involves the participation of more than 40 cities worldwide. It targets medium-sized cities in developing and least-developed countries, and emphasizes good governance and practical initiatives for the municipalities and their citizens.

The CCCI team has adapted participatory processes developed

previously by UN-Habitat so as to specifically address climate change issues within the city. A complementary set of tools has been developed to support cities in assessing vulnerabilities, analyzing baseline emissions, and prioritizing mitigation and adaptation actions. Since 2008, CCCI has been generously supported by the Governments of Norway, Germany and Sweden, the United Nations Development Account, the Cities Alliance, and

other sources of global, regional, national and local funding.

Bulletins of the Cities and Climate Change Initiative are periodically published electronically. For more information, or to be added to our mailing list, contact ccci@un.org or visit www.unhabitat.org/ccci.

CCCI Cities and Countries

