

Fourth United Nations Environment Assembly Cities Summit

Innovation for Livable and Sustainable Cities: Multi-Level and Integrated Urban Systems

13 March, 9:00 – 19:00

Venue: ICRAF

OBJECTIVES

- Provide an **opportunity for high level dialogue between mayors, ministers, private sector leaders and civil society representatives** on challenges and innovative solutions to achieve livable, inclusive, and sustainable cities – working across sectors and across all levels of government;
- **As an input to UNEA-4, identify key messages and success stories on innovation for sustainable consumption and production in cities**, with a view to localizing SDGs, creating more integrated urban systems, and implementing ecological transition in the context of the New Urban Agenda;
- **Kick start a process to develop partnerships and commitments** to collaborate on a new work area implementing integrated urban infrastructure solutions with an eye to launch and promote it at future global milestone events, such as the International Conference on Climate Action, the UN Secretary General’s Climate Summit, COP25, WUF10;
- **Establish the Cities Summit as a key component of UN Environment Assemblies** to highlight the importance of localizing the SDGs and allow for engagement with sub-national leaders.

THEMATIC BACKGROUND

The way we go about urban development will influence whether we will meet the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Achievement of most, if not all, of the SDGs will require significant action at the city level and **taking a dual lens of SDGs 11 – Sustainable Cities, and 12 – Sustainable Consumption and Production will allow us to identify solutions at city level able to generate multiple benefits.**

Three quarters of resource use, waste, and greenhouse gas emissions already come from cities, and trends of urbanization, population and economic growth will further drive up these numbers if we don’t get smarter in the way we consume and produce. Many cities face serious air and water pollution, both a direct result of unsustainable consumption and production patterns, making citizens’ health a key driver for action.

According to the recent IPCC special report, restricting climate change to 1.5°C would need “rapid and far-reaching” changes around energy production and use, industry and buildings design, as well as the planning of cities and infrastructure.

By integrating urban systems across sectors, we can achieve significantly higher resource savings than by taking siloed, sectoral approaches, according to the International Resource Panel recent publication “Weight of Cities”, and can help facilitate transitions to circular economies. These savings are in the order of 30 - 60 percent and can be realized by leveraging connections, interactions, and resource sharing across multiple urban systems.

The good news is that cities have a long history of inspiring citizens, companies and governments to come together to innovate and use their power to create change.

Many cities are beginning to address these issues in a systemic and city-wide manner, through city planning and cross-sectoral policies within their mandates. This needs to go hand in hand with regional and national policies. Employing a set of legal, financial and planning instruments city-wide, coupled with cross-sectorial engagement, can result in measurable and sustainable improvements. Connecting sectors such as water, eco-system services, and infrastructure is also providing cities with nature-based solutions as part of mitigation as well as adaptation options. In addition, the immense growth in urban infrastructure (in its widest definition) projected in the growing economies provides an opportunity to future-proof related investments from the start.

The Summit is a unique opportunity to focus on ways to reduce the ‘weight of cities’ by using our resources more efficiently through urban systems integration and circularity, and thereby harnessing climate and societal benefits, including health and jobs. We will discuss how, by developing integrated solutions for urban systems, we can build more sustainable, prosperous, and equal cities into the coming decades, in line with the vision set out in the New Urban Agenda.

MULTI-LEVEL HOLISTIC APPROACH

Part of the official programme of the Fourth UN Environment Assembly, this full day event will bring together mayors, ministers, private sector leaders and key influencers to share innovative solutions for integrated infrastructure, and forge new partnerships, across all levels of government, across public and private sector players and across sectors, to achieve livable and sustainable cities.

Organized as an interactive dialogue, introduced by short inputs, participants will have the opportunity to both present their own experiences and have quality time for debate and exchange. Panels will feature participation of national and local government representatives, private sector and civil society. Each session will also explore how to better integrate nature-based solutions which are often overlooked or neglected for what is perceived to be more high-tech solutions provided mainly by hard infrastructure. Ecosystem-based approaches are often easy to implement and cost effective, while providing for multiple benefits for health and well-being and each session will explore how to think green, blue and grey infrastructure together.

9.00am	<u>Opening</u>
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	<p>Welcome by <i>Executive Director, UN Environment – Urban Integration to Decarbonize, Decouple and Detoxify at City Level</i></p> <p>Welcome by <i>Executive Director, UNHABITAT - Dense, Diverse, Decentralized and Digital Cities</i></p>
9.15am	<p><u>Special Message by the President of the 4th UNEA</u></p> <p><i>The importance of city action for sustainable consumption and production</i></p> <p>Mr Siim Kiisler, The Minister of Environment of Estonia (TBC)</p>
9.30am	<p><u>Keynotes from Mayors</u> (global south and global north)</p> <p><i>Integrating Urban Systems for Efficient, Inclusive, Sustainable Development / Achieving Circularity at the City Level</i></p>
10.00am	<p><u>Global Trends and Opportunities for Integrated Urban Systems</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JCI, Trends in Urban Integration: Smart City Indicator Study • Siemens, Assessment of Opportunities for Urban Integration • International Resource Panel: Weight of Cities Report <p><u>Good Governance to Harness the Opportunities</u></p> <p>Governance and vertical policy integration plays a major role in the success of sustainable transitions. SDG 11, the New Urban Agenda and major Multilateral Environmental Agreements all recognized the importance of the local agenda to achieve their goals.</p> <p><i>Facilitator: UCLG</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Moderation of the panel Panellists will explore how can national, sub-national, and local governments can work together to enable integrated urban infrastructure solutions and see greater benefits for all parties?</i>
11.15am	Coffee break
11.30am	<p><u>Integrated Planning and Policies for Circular Transitions</u></p> <p>Siloed planning of urban infrastructure means forgoing opportunities for resource efficiency of urban systems. This session will explore integrated approaches to infrastructure planning as well as cross-sectoral policies that allow for cumulative efficiency gains, particularly waste and by-products of one system to be reused in another, reducing cities’ resource demands and GHG emissions, while improving health and well-being.</p> <p><i>Facilitator: ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability</i></p> <p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can integrated land-use and infrastructure planning help identify and promote innovative technology solutions?</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are best practice cross-sector policies that are enabling integrated technology solutions?</i> • <i>Which biodiversity services should be considered and what type of interventions should be prioritised to ensure an ecosystem-aware urban development and maximise associated co-benefits?</i> • <i>How can public procurement policy be used as a lever to spur integrated solutions?</i>
12.45pm	Lunch
1.45pm	<p><u>Technology Futures: Integrated Urban Systems and the Enabling Technologies That Will Get Us There</u></p> <p>This session explores the role of key enabling technologies that can facilitate connections and interactions across one or more of the following infrastructure sectors: buildings, energy, transportation, wastewater, treatment and waste management, e.g. intelligent thermal grids or district energy, storage capacity, and Information and Communication Technologies.</p> <p><i>Facilitator: Cities Alliance</i></p> <p><i>Key questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What technologies can help cities and companies deliver integrated infrastructure that make cities work more efficiently and sustainably?</i> • <i>How does the trend of more integrated infrastructure interact with larger trends in climate, energy, and sustainability policy?</i> • <i>What is the role of procurement and tender design in spurring integrated urban solutions and circularity?</i> • <i>How to ensure that the role and potential of ecosystem-based approaches are fully integrated to urban infrastructure options?</i>
3.00pm	<p><u>Improving Financial Readiness and Bankability</u></p> <p>€3.7 trillion annually needs to be spent on urban infrastructure by 2030, according to the Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance (CCFLA). An additional €1 trillion annually is required to ensure city infrastructure is low-carbon and climate-resilient. This session will explore how to unlock investments in sustainable pathways, making the imperatives of decoupling, decarbonizing and detoxifying prime investment opportunities.</p> <p><i>Facilitator: Climate Chance</i></p> <p><i>Key Questions:</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How are the private sector and the development banks creating new financing solutions for city access?</i> • <i>What business models are conducive to enabling investment in integrated urban solutions?</i> • <i>How can cities enhance finance readiness and facilitate investment in integrated urban infrastructure?</i> • <i>How can district-scale strategies help cities attract finance urban infrastructure integration?</i> • <i>What are the right incentives to trigger both public and private investments and facilitate innovations on ecosystem-based solutions?</i>
4.15pm	Coffee break
4.30pm	<p><u>Implementing from the Bottom Up: The Role of Communities in Urban Transformations</u></p> <p>Community engagement and innovative participatory processes will be essential to reaching ambitious, transformative goals in urban planning and policies. In addition to changing consumption and lifestyle patterns of citizens, community and civil society participation in local planning processes is key to ensuring that the changes respond to key challenges of urbanization in ways that are inclusive and create a better quality of life for all.</p> <p><i>Facilitator: UN Habitat</i></p> <p><i>Key Questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are best practices and key challenges for participatory planning and budgeting? Are there examples and tools?</i> • <i>How can policymakers engage communities more proactively to ensure solutions that will be well-used and lead to sustainable consumption and behaviour changes?</i> • <i>What solutions exist that enable communities and civil society to access funds and finance their own innovative projects at the neighbourhood level?</i> • <i>How can communities be involved in making their cities and settlements more resilient against impacts of climate change and loss of vital ecosystems?</i> • <i>Urban expansion often claims natural land that citizens rely on for livelihood generation. How can low-income communities or other vulnerable groups (e.g. women, elderly, disabled, youth, children) be involved in planning consultations?</i>

5.15pm	<p><u>Outcomes of the Summit and Next Steps</u></p> <p>In a closing panel discussion, high-level takeaways will be summarized, and an outcome paper of the Summit will be formalized as a contribution to UNEA-4.</p> <p>The session will also look forward to next steps in the work towards integrated models for urban systems, with announcements of publications, commitments, or partnerships that are in line with this mission.</p> <p><i>Facilitator: UN Environment Programme</i></p>
6.00pm	The event will be followed by a reception (TBC)

PARTICIPANTS

The event will be open to all UNEA participants. Depending on the capacity of the meeting room, previous registration is required.

All co-organizers will disseminate information about this event amongst their respective networks trying to increase representation from all regions of the world, including cities from different scales in the event and the UN Environmental Assembly overall.

LANGUAGES

The event will take place with simultaneous translation into English, Spanish and French. (TBC)

WEBCAST

The event will be webcasted to allow maximum impact and visibility for the general public.

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