

UN HABITAT

CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE

NEWSLETTER

October 2014

'City' Initiatives Launched at UN Climate Summit

On 23 September 2014, the UN Secretary-General hosted a Climate Summit in New York City. The Summit was an effort to catalyze ambitious action to reduce emissions and strengthen climate resilience. Additionally it aimed to mobilize political will for a global legal agreement by 2015 that limits the world to a less than 2-degree Celsius rise in global temperature. The Cities Action session was co-chaired by the Prime Minister of Italy and the President of Tunisia. 'City' initiatives -- including several whose development UN-Habitat supported -- were launched by high level officials from Brazil, USA, China and Ghana; the Mayors of Zhenjiang, Rio de Janeiro, Seoul and Paris; the CEOs of the French Development Agency and the Japan International Cooperation Agency; and the President of Standard and Poor's Financial Services.

The **Compact of Mayors** is an agreement by city networks to undertake a transparent and supportive approach to city-level emissions reductions. Furthermore its aim is to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience to climate change in line with national level climate protection efforts. The initiative will encourage cities to publicly commit to deepen greenhouse gas GHG emissions reductions; make existing targets and plans public; and report on their progress annually, following the Global Protocol on Community-scale GHG Emissions.

The **Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance** is a partnership between public



The City Policy Room. From left to right: Raf Tuts, Branch Coordinator, UN-Habitat; Dr. Joan Clos, Executive Director, UN-Habitat; Barbara Hendricks, German Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety; and Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary of UNFCCC © UN-Habitat

financial institutions, private institutional investors, development agencies, NGOs, and others. The Alliance aims to catalyze and accelerate additional capital flows to cities, maximize investment in low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure, and close the investment gap in urban areas. The success of the Alliance will be measured by its ability to stimulate the flow of investment in climate-related infrastructure projects in cities by a spectrum of financial actors.

The **Urban Electric Mobility Initiative** seeks to promote the widespread adoption of electric

vehicles in cities, with a target of raising the share of travel by electric vehicles in those urban areas to 30% by 2030. It will have global coverage and will target at least 100 cities. Knowledge and research based organizations such as UN-Habitat will play a facilitating role through knowledge sharing and capacity building.

Parties launched the **Resilient Cities Acceleration Initiative** campaign to double the number of cities and partners in support of city resilience building; to assist five hundred local governments to develop resilience action plans; and to catalyze US\$2 billion of



Group shot from the Cities Action Announcements session. © IISD

'City' Initiatives Launched at UN Climate Summit (continued)

in-kind and direct support for cities' action plans by 2020. The overarching objective of this initiative is to accelerate the design and implementation of integrated strategies that strengthen the resilience of urban systems.

To facilitate further discussion of these initiatives, UN-Habitat hosted a side event, the City Policy Room. During this high-level meeting, UN-Habitat Executive Director Dr. Joan Clos underscored the need

for a broad coalition of actors to take action on climate change in urban areas. Other distinguished speakers included UNFCCC Executive Director, Ms. Christiana Figueres; German Minister of Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, Ms. Barbara Hendricks; Global Environment Facility CEO, Dr. Naoko Ishii; ICLEI President Mr. David Cadman; and UCLG President Mr. Kadir Topbas. The event also included senior officials

from the World Bank, Veolia Environnement and CalPERS; as well as mayors and senior officials from Mexico City, Bogota, Nantes (France), Tacloban (Philippines), Bristol (UK) and Des Moines (USA).

For more information on these and other initiatives visit <http://www.un.org/climatechange/summit/action-areas>

UN-Habitat's Deputy Executive Director chairs Cities Forum

In June 2014, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held its Climate Change Conference in Bonn, Germany, as part of its annual calendar of climate change negotiations. The mid-year Bonn Conferences are smaller than the year-end Conference of Parties (COPs), but play an important role in advancing climate negotiations and dialogue.

The highlight of the conference from the local government perspective was a forum on experiences and best practice of cities and subnational authorities in relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation. This Forum, which took place on 10 June, was chaired by UN-Habitat's Deputy Executive Director (DED) Aisa Kirabo Kacyira. UNFCCC Executive Secretary (ES) Christiana Figueres also participated. The Forum was organized under the auspices of the working group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action. This group was tasked with negotiating a new climate agreement.

The Forum reflected the growing realization that cities and other subnational entities play an important role in addressing the climate challenge, but are not yet fully integrated into national and international frameworks. Through the Forum, member states were able to discuss and evaluate the possibilities and modalities of how



Flanked by the Executive Secretary of UNFCCC, Christina Figueres, the UN-Habitat DED Dr. Aisa Kirabo Kacyira (right) chairs the City Forum. © UN-Habitat

the potential of city level climate action can be unleashed and integrated into policy frameworks.

ES Figueres and DED Kacyira gave the opening keynote addresses that set the stage for high-level presentations on the potential of city-led climate action. These inputs facilitated dialogue between participants on: i) the current and potential roles of cities and subnational authorities in climate action; ii) the challenges and barriers faced; and iii) the means of catalyzing future action.

The Forum ended with three clear recommendations for the UNFCCC. The first highlighted the need to understand the diversity of locally designed responses to climate change, and recognize such action. It was proposed that this could be achieved through a system for recognition of initiatives and actions by non-state actors.

The second emphasized the need for enhanced interaction of the UNFCCC process with subnational authorities through future meetings, similar to the Forum. This would allow Parties to engage further on the means and impacts of coordinating and facilitating action at the subnational level and provide a platform for practitioners to share experiences.

The third considered the potential of establishing an Action Programme under the COPs to support the integration of action through established governance structures and guide the supportive work of various UNFCCC institutions, including the operating entities of the financial mechanism.

Local Governments implementing climate change and disaster risk reduction into land use plans



Members of the Guiuan Recovery and Sustainable Development Group reviewing climate change vulnerability assessment and hazard maps updated after Typhoon Haiyan. © UN-Habitat/Prisella Mejillano

In order to mainstream climate change and disaster risk reduction in comprehensive land use plans, as advised by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board of the Philippines, cities in the Philippines are preparing Climate and Disaster Risk Assessments, following guidelines prepared with the support of the Cities and Climate Change Initiative of UN-Habitat.

UN-Habitat provided technical assistance to the Tacloban and Guiuan Recovery and Sustainable Development Groups in collecting and analyzing climate and hazard

information, scoping the potential impacts of disasters and climate change, and organizing hazard exposure database development. Important information was discovered through the initial climate change vulnerability assessment in Guiuan Municipality that faces up to eight separate hazards, namely, flooding, storm surges, strong winds, increasing temperatures during the summer, increasing rainfall days during the rainy season, soil liquefaction, ground shaking and tsunamis.

Honiara Vulnerability Assessment finds application

The recently published “Honiara, Solomon Islands - Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment” highlights the city’s hazards, sensitivity and adaptive capacity, assisting key disaster response actors to develop the city council’s disaster response plan. This has

further supported Honiara City Council to strengthen its disaster preparedness and management capacity and acknowledge that long-term resilience building needs to be addressed, as recommended in the Vulnerability Assessment. This was triggered after floods in

April 2014 destroyed 166 houses, displaced 1530 residents, and devastated parts of Guadalcanal province in the Solomon Islands.

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 2014

Urban Futures Workshop

The Urban Futures Workshop is a collaboration between the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Global Pulse and UN-Habitat that will bring together government representatives and experts in the field of climate

change, resilience and futures analysis to take a broader view of urbanization, climate change and resilience.

The workshop will examine the role that scientific and technological approaches can play in strengthening resilience,

while enhancing the partnerships on collaborative interventions in urbanization in the Asia Pacific Region.

The workshop will be held in Bangkok, Thailand from 14 to 15 October 2014.

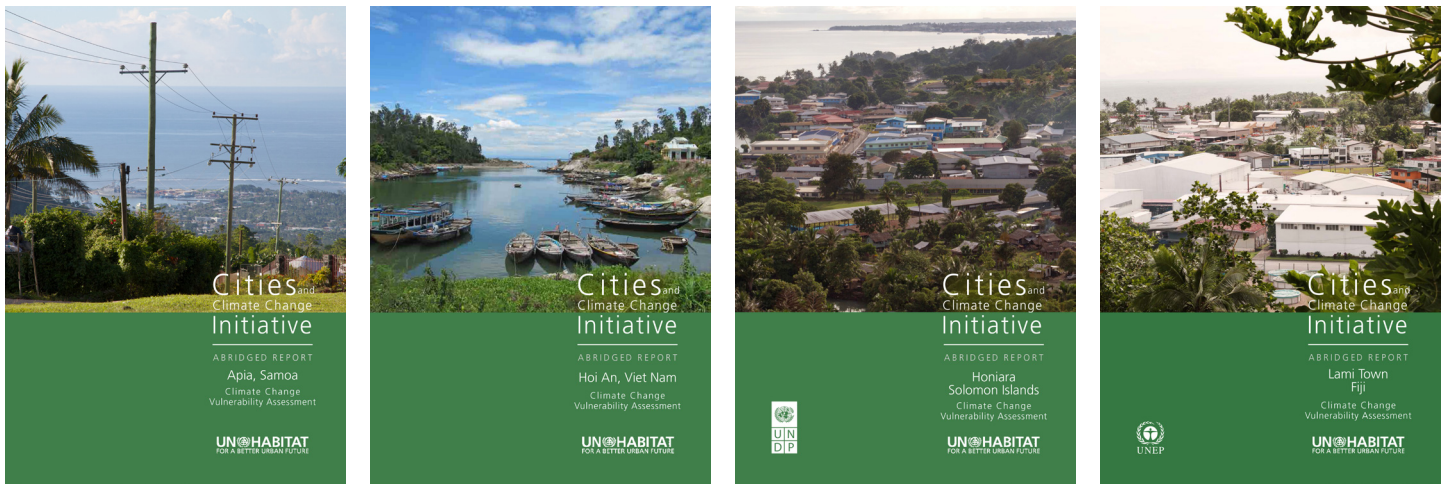
UN-Habitat invited to participate in key climate change meeting

The Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) has invited UN-Habitat to participate in its next Climate Change Conference, to be held 20 to 25 October 2014 in Bonn, Germany. The ADP is a subsidiary body of the UNFCCC that was established in December 2011. The mandate of the ADP is to develop the new climate

agreement, more specifically, a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties, which is to be implemented no later than 2015 in order for it to be adopted at the twenty-first session of the Conference of Parties (COPs) and for it to come into effect and be implemented from 2020.

The ADP invited UN-Habitat to report back in detail on the progress made since the UN Climate Conference in June 2014, and on the outcomes from the Cities Action Area at the Secretary General’s Climate Summit in New York in September 2014 (see *previous articles*).

Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments



Screen shots of Vulnerability Assessments for Apia, Hoi An, Honiara and Lami. © UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat has published city-level climate change vulnerability assessments for cities in Asia and the Pacific. The cities are Apia (Samoa), Honiara (Solomon Islands), Lami (Fiji), Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea), Pakse, (Lao), Hoi An (Viet Nam), and Makassar (Indonesia).

Each assessment starts with a brief background of the city, an analysis of the climate change vulnerability focusing on exposure to climate change hazards, socio-economic and bio-physical sensitivities and the adaptive capacities of the city and its communities.

Based on its analysis, each assessment identifies vulnerable people, places and sectors and provides preliminary climate change adaptation options. To read abridged versions of the assessments, visit: www.unhabitat.org/urban-initiatives/cities-and-climate-change-initiative/ and www.facebook.com/ccciap

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 is being developed to support cities in raising awareness on the impact of climate change and support mitigation and adaptation activities. 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.

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

CCCI Cities and Countries

