

UN HABITAT CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER

June 2012

Partners launch Global Protocol for Community-scale Greenhouse Gas Emissions

On 15 May 2012, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group and ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, together with partners including UN-Habitat, launched a pilot version of the Global Protocol for Community-scale Greenhouse Gas Emissions (also called the "community protocol") at a side event during the UNFCCC climate meetings in Bonn, Germany.

Developed in close collaboration with the World Resources Institute, and building on the earlier work of the Cities Alliance-funded Joint Work Programme of UN-Habitat, UNEP and the World Bank Group, the landmark effort represents a significant step forward in harmonizing emissions measurement and reporting processes for cities of all sizes and geographies. The goal is to establish a single minimum global standard for community-scale greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions measurement. A transparent, consistent and common approach will provide cities with a much needed tool to increase access to climate action planning and financing.

Mr. Jay Carson, C40 Executive Director, stated that "measurement and reporting underpins the local action driving C40 Cities leadership in addressing global climate change, and as such, the protocol represents the interests, needs and challenges of C40 Cities."

Mr. Konrad Otto-Zimmermann, Secretary General of ICLEI stated that "the implementation of the protocol will strengthen efforts for measurable, reportable, verifiable local climate action. It will enhance access of local govern-



The road transport sector significantly contributes to urban GHG emissions - Kampala, Uganda ©UN-Habitat/Nicholas Kajoba

ments to global climate funds and help cities to raise the level of ambition of national governments to mitigate climate change."

Mr. Manish Bapna, Interim President, World Resources Institute stated that "the release of the pilot community-level protocol moves us toward a much-needed and common approach to accounting for greenhouse gas emissions in cities, a major driver of global emissions."

Rafael Tuts, the coordinator of UN-Habitat's Urban Planning and Design Branch, stated that the protocol would form a critical input for low-emission urban development strategies. He said that the protocol will also offer a platform for cities to share lessons with other cities

around the world, and advocate for policies that better address climate change in urban areas.

In next steps, partners will pilot test the protocol in a series of cities. UN-Habitat and CCCI plan to participate in this endeavour.

The protocol builds on the International Standard for City GHG Emissions that was developed under the Joint Work Programme, and released for public comment at the World Urban Forum in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in March, 2010. More than 30 expert organizations worldwide and cities provided comments on that standard, which were incorporated in the pilot version of the protocol launched in Bonn.

UN-Habitat applies for accreditation as agencies of the Global Environment Facility and Adaptation Fund

Over the past several months, UN-Habitat has taken two key steps to strengthen its long-term role in helping cities in the developing world to access resources for environmental and climate change related activities.

In December 2011, UN-Habitat applied to become a Project Agency of the Global Environment Facility. Accreditation would allow UN-Habitat to greatly expand its role in helping cities to access resources to mitigate and adapt to climate change, as well as to address other pressing environmental concerns. (This action actually represents a reapplication on the part of UN-Habitat: in 2009 the agency applied to become a GEF agency, but the Fund never acted upon that submittal.)

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), which serves as a financial mechanism to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UN-

FCCC) and other global environmental conventions, is the largest funder of projects to improve the global environment. During the past twenty years the GEF has allocated US\$9.5 billion, supplemented by more than US\$24 billion in co-financing, for more than 2,700 projects in 165 developing and transitioning countries. At present, however, UN-Habitat does not enjoy direct access to GEF resources. It can only access GEF funds indirectly, through an accredited GEF agency.

To date UN-Habitat has acted as executing agency (in partnership with an accredited agency) on three GEF projects. One project, "Sustainable Land Use Planning for Integrated Land and Water Management for Disaster Preparedness and Vulnerability Reduction in the Lower Limpopo Basin", has been completed. Meanwhile two mitigation projects are ongoing: "Promoting Energy

Efficiency in Buildings in East Africa", and "Promoting Sustainable Transport Solutions for East Africa". In response to the GEF's recent interest in innovative 'urban systems' approaches to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, new project concepts are under development.

Meanwhile, in March of this year UN-Habitat applied to the climate change Adaptation Fund to become a Multi-lateral Implementing Entity. This recently-established fund has been developing in a manner that is of interest to urbanists and the climate change community. One of the first implementing entities that it accredited was not a multi-lateral public agency but rather a national non-governmental organization: the Centre de Suivi Ecologique in Senegal; and its first approved project, "Adaptation to coastal erosion in vulnerable areas", also in Senegal, has a human settlements dimension.

Sihanoukville officials in city-to-city learning exchange

Ten staff from the Sihanoukville provincial government undertook a study tour to Sorsogon City, Philippines, to share experiences on improving local governance and demonstrating pilot projects in response to the threat of climate change.

Sihanoukville, a coastal city in the south-west of Cambodia with an estimated population of 90,000, is particularly vulnerable to storms, sea-level rise and coastal erosion. Because Sorsogon is a similar sized city, facing similar climate hazards, the tour provided an excellent opportunity to expose the visiting delegation to some of the successful adaptation measures which have been undertaken in Sorsogon. Among the pilot initiatives visited were a school which has been designated as an evacuation centre, equipped with basic shelter, water and sanitation. The delegation also visited housing units for urban poor communities, which had been designed and constructed to storm-resilient standards by the community. These two initiatives in particular



The delegation of Sihanoukville officials in Sorsogon ©UN-Habitat/Nay Sally

were relevant to Sihanoukville because the city also faces serious damage as a result of storms. Currently, urban poor housing in the coastal areas is often constructed informally, without complying with building regulations. During the monsoon season houses are frequently destroyed and there is no evacuation route or other basic disaster preparedness in place for local people.

Through funding by Cambodia's Ministry

of Environment's Climate Change Alliance Trust Fund, which also supported the tour, vulnerable housing and disaster preparedness is being prepared through evacuation planning and revision of land management and building codes, which will support the urban poor in Sihanoukville to live in housing which is more storm-resilient. The study tour ensured that the provincial government staff have the capacity to support the local communities to build this resilience.

Climate Change & decentralization regional workshop in Sri Lanka

UN-Habitat in partnership with the Management Resources for Good Governance and the Ministry of Environment of Sri Lanka held a regional Asia-Pacific workshop on Climate Change and Decentralization from 8 to 9 May 2012.

The two day workshop brought together over 60 decision-makers and practitioners from national and local government agencies, international and national development agencies, and community organizations and academia to share knowledge and experiences towards identifying strategies for better decentralization of climate change action.

The workshop was opened by Mr. Anura Yapa, the Minister of Environment, who stated that the country is facing several impacts from climate related challenges including soil erosion and land degradation, pollution of inland waters, loss of biodiversity and depletion of coastal resources. On a positive note, Mr. Yapa appreciated the strong partnership between his ministry and UN-Habitat, which has resulted in the formulation of a national climate change policy.

Mr. Laxman Perera, the UN-Habitat Coun-



Opening ceremony of the Sri Lanka workshop ©UN-Habitat/ Nipuna Kumbalathara

try Programme Manager, highlighted the fact that densely populated and developed areas face the heaviest burdens from the impacts of climate change. The impacts of related disasters affect the poorest communities more adversely, as economic and social barriers confine them to the most vulnerable areas. For example, Mr. Perera stated that 70% of Sri Lanka's urban population and 80% of its economic infrastructure networks are concentrated in coastal cities, highly vulnerable to climate change impacts.

Mr. Chris Radford, a senior human settlements officer with UN-Habitat warned that there could be as many as 200 million environmental refugees worldwide by the year 2050, if cohesive and sustainable ac-

tion is not taken to mitigate and respond to climate change issues at global, national and local levels. Also part of the opening ceremony was Mr. Douglas Keh, the UNDP Country Director.

On Day One of the workshop, a dialogue facilitated by Mr. Bernhard Barth and Mr. Kibe Muigai, technical experts from UN-Habitat headquarters, as well as Mr. Saman Senanayake, a leading local practitioner, centered on presentation of country papers, and how climate change initiatives can be better implemented through localized participatory approaches and multi-level governance. On Day Two, participants explored ways forward in working group sessions, using the UN-Habitat-devised International Guidelines on Decentralization.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), 20 to 22 June 2012



This high-level conference, which takes place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil will mark the 20th anniversary of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), and the 10th anniversary of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg.

Rio+20 will focus on two themes: a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and the institutional framework for sustainable

development. The result will be a focused political document that will guide member states on their sustainable development trajectories over the next decades.

As part of the preparations, UN-Habitat submitted formal inputs to the draft outcome text of the conference, "The Future We Want". During the conference itself UN-Habitat will be hosting a High-Level Side Event 'Future Cities and National Urban Policies', 'The Urban Summit' with United Cities and Local Governments, a Sustainable Development Learning Event and the 'Global Compact Corporate Sustainability Forum' event.

Urban climate change experts meeting to develop Quick Guide for Policy Makers, 8 to 10 July 2012

UN-Habitat, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Rockefeller Foundation are currently developing a Quick Guide on Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience in Urban Poor Communities in Asia-Pacific. More than 40 good practices from the region were reviewed in preparation for the guide. An Expert Group Meeting will review a draft in Surabaya, Indonesia, in conjunction with the CityNet 25th Anniversary Congress.

UN-Habitat's sixth World Urban Forum (WUF6) in Naples, Italy, 1 to 6 September 2012.

The forum was established to examine one of the most pressing problems facing the world today: rapid urbanization and its impact on communities, cities, economies,

climate change and policies. This year's theme is "The Urban Future".

The premier conference on cities and urban issues will focus on four areas for discussion: urban planning, equity and prosperity, productive cities and urban mobility, energy and environment. In parallel with these main dialogue sessions, there will be an additional 160 networking, side and training events. An exhibition, open

to delegates and the general public, will showcase some of the world's leading cities, share experiences, best practices and innovations in urban development.

Online e-Debates are underway at www.worldurbanforum.org

Training Workshop on Climate Change Planning, 2 to 5 November 2012.

The International Urban Training Centre

(IUTC) in the Republic of Korea will host a UN-Habitat training workshop on Climate Change Planning. The training is limited to city planners and climate change officers from the Asia-Pacific region who have conducted a basic urban climate change vulnerability assessment and are now in the process of identifying and prioritizing climate change action. The workshop will also explore funding mechanisms for adaptation interventions.

PUBLICATIONS

CCCI launches tool: Developing Local Climate Change Plans

"Developing local Climate Change Plans – A Guide for Cities in Developing Countries" is part of UN-Habitat's Cities and Climate Change Initiative tool series for local government officials and urban professionals in developing countries who have to deal with the growing problems of climate change.

This publication provides a simple planning process based on understanding long-term climate change impacts, ur-

ban development challenges and the needs of citizens.

The tool gives guidance that any city can use to get started no matter how limited its resources, describing "quick win" activities that address both climate and urban issues simultaneously.



ABOUT US

Headquartered at UN-Habitat in Nairobi, the Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI) involves the participation of more than 20 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 undertaking mitigation and adaptation activities. Since 2008, CCCI has been generously supported by the Government of Norway, the United

Nations Development Account, the Cities Alliance, the Government of Sweden 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

