

GLOBAL REPORT ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

E-Newsletter

Volume 2 Issue 3, July 2011

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

The Global Report on Human Settlements



Prepared under a mandate of the United Nations General Assembly, the Global Report on Human Settlements provides the most up to date assessment of urban conditions and trends globally. It is an essential reference tool for researchers, academics, planners, public authorities and civil society organizations around the world.

Cities and Climate Change: Global Report on Human Settlements 2011

Unprecedented disaster, wide-scale disruption and loss face many of the world's cities because of climate change. This is the stark warning in Cities and Climate Change: Global Report on Human Settlements 2011. At the same time, more than half of the world's population now lives in urban centres. Soon it will be two-thirds.

With a call for immediate action by cities of the world, the report states that if concerted action is not taken to reduce greenhouse gases and promote more environmentally sustainable and fairer urban development, there will be a deadly collision between urbanization and climate change.

This collision has been, and continues to be, fuelled by two human-induced factors. The first is urbanization, and the second is the impact of greenhouse gases that this report describes as having been 'unleashed by development and manipulation of the environment'.

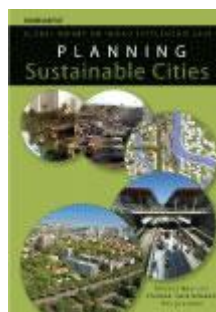
The growing demands of cities in terms of consumption and lifestyle compound the pace of climate change and increase the risks.

"Urban enterprises, individual use of vehicles and rising consumer populations are key sources of greenhouse gases. Not only are cities major contributors to climate change, but with ever-increasing densities, they will also be the hardest hit when nature strikes back," said Joan Clos, the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT. "We have to have robust local level responses to climate change if we are to have any real impact."

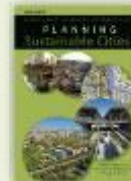
The report says many cities exceed the recommended annual average figure of 2.2 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent value per capita.

Some of the possible effects on the world's cities:

- As many as 200 million people may be displaced by climate change by 2050.
- It is predicted that sea level rise and its associated impacts will, by the 2080s, affect five times as many coastal residents as they did in 1990.
- In coastal North African cities, a 1-2 degree increase in temperature could lead to sea level rise exposing 6-25 million residents to flooding.
- By 2070, almost all cities in the top ten exposure to flooding risk category will be located in developing countries (particularly in China, India and Thailand).
- Today around 40 million people live in a 100-year flood plain. By 2070 the population living at this risk level could rise to 150 million people. The estimated financial impact of a 100-year flood would also rise from USD 3 trillion in 1999 to USD 38 trillion in this time.



PAST ISSUES



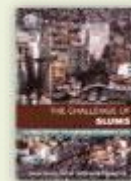
Planning Sustainable Cities - Global Report on Human Settlements 2009



Enhancing Urban Safety and Security - Global Report on Human Settlements 2007



Financing Urban Shelter - Global Report on Human Settlements 2005



The Challenge of Slums - Global Report on Human Settlements 2003

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- In Latin America, 12-81 million residents could experience increased water stress by the 2020s. By the 2050s this number could rise to 79-178 million.

The present rapid pace of urbanization is unprecedented, with an almost five-fold increase of the urban population between 1950 and 2011. The fastest rates of urbanization are currently taking place in the least developed countries. In fact, that is where more than 90 per cent of the world's urban population growth is occurring.

At the same time many of those people are forced to live in slums and informal settlements that are often built on marginal or dangerous land that is not deemed suitable for permanent residential structures, such as steep slopes, flood plains or industrial areas. Faulty construction methods and missing or inadequate infrastructure design contribute further to slope degradation. These populations are even more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as heavy rain, flash floods and landslides.

According to the report, cities and climate change are on course for a deadly collision.

For more information on the above and related issues report and to download the Abridged Edition of the Global Report on Human Settlements 2011 and background studies on cities and climate change go to

<http://www.unhabitat.org/grhs>. The full report will be available online at the same location from 1 August 2011 onwards. To purchase the report, please go to www.unhabitat.org/publications

To view videos of the launches of the Global Report on Human Settlements at LSE Cities, LSE, London (28 March 2011) and the New School, New York (11 May 2011) please go the following links:

<http://www.urban-age.net/events/publicLectures/2011/03/28/cities-and-climate-change/>

http://www.youtube.com/thenewschoolnyc#p/u/12/_Jg6K-3v99o

PAST ISSUES

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Next Issue: Sustainable Urban Mobility: Global Report on Human Settlements 2013

The report will review key trends, practices and policies on sustainable mobility and transportation patterns from cities around the world. It will also provide insights on how to improve the working and living conditions of urban populations by meeting their transport needs in an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable manner. The report will be organized as follows:

- Chapter 1: The Crisis of Sustainability in Urban Mobility
- Chapter 2: Non-Motorized Transport
- Chapter 3: Public Transport
- Chapter 4: Informal Motorized Transport
- Chapter 5: Private Motorized Transport
- Chapter 6: Commercial Goods Transport
- Chapter 7: Land-Use and Urban Mobility Planning
- Chapter 8: Social Sustainability of Urban Mobility
- Chapter 9: Urban Mobility and the Environment
- Chapter 10: The Economics of Sustainable Urban Mobility
- Chapter 11: Institutions and Governance for Urban Mobility
- Chapter 12: Towards Sustainable Urban Mobility

The report is scheduled to be launched in April 2013