GLOBAL REPORT ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

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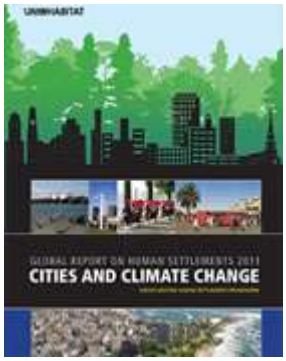
The Global Report on Human Settlements

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 – Background studies

A series of case studies were commissioned specifically for this Global Report to illustrate empirical conditions and trends; as well as effective policy responses. Many of the illustrative boxes contained in the different chapters are based on these background studies, while some of the experiences described in the studies – including related empirical evidence – are also directly integrated within the text of the chapters of the report. Highlights of some of these studies are indicated below.



The Contribution of Urban Areas to Climate Change: New York City Case Study
Lily Parshall, Masahiko Haraguchi, Cynthia Rosenzweig and Stephen A. Hammer

New York is the largest city in the United States and a global center of commerce and culture. New York City's high population density of over 10,000 people/km2, extensive public transit system, and status as a leading financial center shape patterns of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In general, the city's total emissions are high but per-capita emissions are low relative to other urban areas in the United States. New York completed its first GHG emissions inventory in 2007, which revealed that more than two-thirds of citywide emissions are associated with electricity and fuel consumption in residential, commercial, and institutional buildings. Also in 2007, New York launched PlaNYC, outlining the Mayor's vision for a more sustainable city. The plan includes the ambitious goal of reducing GHG emissions by 30 percent by 2030. In 2008, the City passed a law requiring annual updates to the emissions inventory to assess progress toward this goal. This case study first summarizes the findings of the city's official inventory. Next, patterns of emissions within the NY Metro Area are discussed. Finally, some of the key considerations when designing local-scale emissions inventories are highlighted.

Changing Perceptions of Climate Mitigation among Competing Priorities: The Case of Durban, South Africa
Alex Aylett

Emissions reduction programs in South Africa's eThekwini Municipality (commonly referred to as the city of Durban) show how mitigation can proceed in a municipality where emissions reduction are secondary to adaptation planning and other more immediate development concerns. Durban's experiences with the Cities for Climate Protection Program (CCP) and the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) show how these internationally coordinated mitigation frameworks function within the multi-stress context of municipalities in developing countries. Durban offers a glimpse of what a developmental local government's earnest attempts at mitigation measures look like. All this outside of the context – common to many cities in developed countries – where mitigation measures are the unquestioned focus of climate change policy and generate significant amounts of political capital for those involved. This case study begins with background on eThekwini and then moves on to discuss the municipality's initial mitigation projects. The limited results of these programmes are used as a bridge into a discussion of the political and institutional barriers that block effective mitigation policy.

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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Approaches to institutional reform that can drive innovation, mitigation, and the mainstreaming of climate policy within municipal structures are then discussed. The case study closes with a brief discussion of the role of non-state actors in supporting and implementing climate change policy.

Climate's Long-term Impacts on Mexico's City Urban Infrastructure
María Eugenia Ibarrarán

The most adverse effects of climate change are likely to take place in cities where people, resources and infrastructure concentrate. Among urban areas, large cities, with complex urban infrastructure systems problems and ongoing environmental problems are at the mercy of these additional changes if careful planning is not done on time and proper investments put in place. Mexico City is a relevant case study for the climate change community to understand impacts on a large, complex city. The greater metropolitan area, Mexico City Metropolitan Area (MCMA), has approximately 20 million people, over four million vehicles, very intricate systems of energy and water supply, and transportation infrastructure that may be highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. This is because it may face a range from relatively mild to extreme weather events. As of now, it is already under significant stress due to population growth and density and growing environmental problems. Additionally, investment has not been keeping up with requirements of capital to upgrade infrastructure, or to at least maintain, these systems. Thus, the key issues raised by this case study that may provide important lessons for other regions of the world include the potential problems raised by the compounding of pressing environmental problems and the expected effects of climate change on the aging infrastructure.

Climate Change Mitigation in Beijing, China
Jimin Zhao

China has become one of the largest greenhouse gas (GHG) producers in the world, and successfully constraining GHG requires effective climate change mitigation actions in urban areas, where energy consumption and anthropogenic GHG emissions are highly concentrated. Beijing is one of the 20 largest cities in the world and one of the world's most heavily polluted cities. Beijing made great efforts to achieve a "Green Olympics", for example, by raising auto emission standards earlier than the rest of the country and investing in a fleet of alternative fuel buses and taxis. The case study of Beijing is based on analysis of semi-structured interviews conducted in Beijing and data collected from secondary sources. It examines and identifies the drivers and constraints behind the strategies and actions being undertaken, and proposes policy implications for promoting more climate actions at the city level. It provides background information on the context of China's climate change policy at the national and local levels and Beijing economic and environmental profile. It further outlines the climate policy and governance and initiatives taken in Beijing in response to climate challenges and analyzes four key drivers and constraints behind the actions. Concluding remarks and policy implications for promoting climate change efforts in Chinese cities are then outlined.

Cities and Climate Change: Adaptation in London, UK
Alex Nickson

London, as a growing world city located on an estuarial river in a water stressed part of the UK faces particular challenges from climate change. The Mayor of London is developing a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for London to protect and enhance the quality of life of Londoners and to help London and Londoners prepare for the impacts of climate change and extreme weather. The draft Adaptation Strategy was published for public consultation in February 2010, and the final strategy will be adopted during the summer 2010. This paper draws significantly from the draft Adaptation Strategy. It sets out the rationale for why London needs to adapt to climate change, how the Greater London Authority (GLA) have identified and prioritised the climate risks facing London, and actions proposed to manage these risks. The paper concludes with a number of lessons that the GLA has learnt in working to understand its climate risks and in initiating risk management actions.

To download the above and other case studies and the full and abridged versions of the Global Report on Human Settlements 2011, please go to http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&catid=555&cid=9272

Next Issue: Planning and Design for 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 urban mobility challenge
Chapter 2: Trends and conditions of urban mobility
Chapter 3: Urban goods transport
Chapter 4: Mobility and urban form
Chapter 5: Access to urban mobility
Chapter 6: Urban mobility and the environment
Chapter 7: The economics of urban mobility
Chapter 8: Institutions and governance for urban mobility
Chapter 9: Towards sustainable urban mobility

The report is scheduled to be launched in October 2013

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