

# UN HABITAT CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER

June 2011

## Pilot Initiatives in Sorsogon City Address Climate Change

Following its climate change vulnerability assessment, Sorsogon City organized a city-wide consultation with residents and stakeholders. This consultation resulted in the formulation of four multi-sectoral Issues Working Groups, set up to address the key issues identified by the city and the local population. All four working groups have developed comprehensive plans to address climate change.

The housing and basic infrastructure component focuses on developing local minimum building standards for Climate Change resilient low-income housing and to apply these in demonstration houses. Initial research (on good practices, legislation and hydraulic hazards) resulted in a workshop where experts and the local community agreed on the basics for the standards. Five hotspots were assessed to adapt the standards to the specific needs. Housing units are being retrofitted and at least 33 houses will be built as pilots. Additional assessments are underway to assess specific vulnerabilities of the basic water and sanitation infrastructure.

The livelihood component focuses on the most vulnerable sectors (fisheries and agriculture) and the identification of alternative livelihoods.

The Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction component focuses on a combination of better information and awareness of the community, better coordination between different government departments on the national and local level and on retrofitting of



Sorsogon City, Philippines ©UN-Habitat/Bernhard Barth

school buildings used as evacuation centers.

The fourth component focuses on Climate Change mitigation, which is particularly remarkable given the limited Greenhouse Gas emissions associated with Sorsogon Cities. Early on the city had committed to convert traditional light bulbs with CFL bulbs. However, after further investigation the city decided to go through a second procurement process when it opted for LED lights: these were seen as better reflecting the city's commitment to high environmental and climate change standards.

The second key element of the mitigation plan is the conversion of the omnipresent motor tricycles, used as

taxi, most of which have two-stroke engines. Technology for electric tricycles (retrofitting) is available in the Philippines and a Social Bank provides loans for such a conversion. Sorsogon is in negotiations to advance these plans. For more information please visit: [www.unhabitat.org.ph/climate-change](http://www.unhabitat.org.ph/climate-change).

# One Year After Conference, Green Building Movement Struggles to Take Root in Africa

In May 2010, builders and stakeholders from 19 countries in Africa assembled in Nairobi, Kenya, and committed themselves to promoting building practices that are environmentally friendly and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Participants in the "Conference on Green Building Rating in Africa" particularly favoured establishing green building councils as a means to promote green building practices. One year after that Conference, which was sponsored by UN-Habitat's Cities and Climate Change Initiative, we survey progress around the region in establishing these Councils and promoting green building practices.

Green building councils (GBCs) advance greener building practices by sponsoring professional development about such technologies. They also develop, adapt to local conditions and promote the use of tools such as LEED or Green Star that measure or rate the environmental friendliness of buildings. They can also lobby governments. Such councils thus can catalyze profound changes in the building industry – a sector with great potential for reducing GHG emissions. While green building rating is voluntary, innovative practices can work their way into reformed building codes. The recently enacted California Green Building Standards Code, for example, effectively requires all new construction to achieve the equivalent of a 'silver rating' under the voluntary LEED system.

At the time of the 2010 Conference there were 20 fully established councils worldwide and another 40 in various stages of development. Most of these Councils, however, were in developed countries: Sub-Saharan Africa had only one established GBC, in South Africa, with no other councils officially under development. At the Conference, however, participants met industry leaders who were forming such Councils in countries nearby like Egypt, Morocco and Mauritius, as well as with representatives of fully established Councils in India and South Africa. They also posed questions to the Executive Director of the World GBC who participated via remote hook-up.

Inspired by these contacts, in the weeks following the Conference several African countries reached out to the World GBC. Representatives from Nigeria and Kenya, whose enthusiastic Conference delegations included more than ten professionals each,

submitted expressions of interest to the World GBC; subsequently they have been recognized as 'prospective' GBCs. Ghana also submitted an EOI to the World GBC but currently holds the less advanced 'associated' status. (Botswana, which did not participate in the Conference, also contacted the World GBC and holds 'associated' status.) A year after the Conference, participants report on the status of their efforts:

**Nigeria.** Akin Akindoyeni, Chair of the Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria, reports that he has been "doing his best to midwife" the GBC Nigeria. After being recognized as a 'prospective' GBC in August 2010, their group quickly identified potential members for their Board of Directors, held a series of meetings, finalised their constitution, and drafted business and marketing plans. They have, however, run into a snag in getting their group officially registered as a corporate entity and hope to resolve this soon.

**Kenya.** Architect Andrew Gremley reports that members of their group are seeing demand from certain clients for the green certification of their buildings. With the development of home-grown rating tools not on the immediate horizon, as an interim measure their group is in discussions with the GBC of South Africa about the possibility of applying their rating tools in Kenya. GBCSA in turn is seeking the permission of the Australian GBC to apply the Green Star tools that originally were customized

for the South African context in Kenya and elsewhere. Gremley plans an official launch of their GBC in July, and a conference in November 2011. A challenge for the community in Kenya is orchestrating the merger of two separate groups that at different times submitted EOIs to the World GBC.

Ghana. In the long term of Ghana GBC sees its objective as "developing a building rating tool system that is recognized in Ghana and accepted internationally". In the short term, however, this GBC has focused on sensitizing professional builders and officials about green building theory and practice. They recently held a public forum on "The Principles and Technology of Green Buildings", and in the future plan a seminar on a similar topic targeted at national and local officials. Meanwhile they have established a web presence at [www.ghgbc.org](http://www.ghgbc.org).

These countries are not alone. Participants in the Nairobi Conference committed themselves to establishing a regional network. In the weeks following the Conference UN-Habitat facilitated an E-dialogue amongst participants; then the World GBC established a page for the Africa Network of GBCs on its website. In September 2010 the GBC of South Africa hosted an 'Africa GBC Day' in Cape Town. UN-Habitat continues to monitor the progress of this movement in Africa, and can provide further support as appropriate. Conference materials are available at [www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=640](http://www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=640).



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## UN-Habitat and UNEP Join Forces on Ecosystem-based Adaptation

Lami is a coastal town of 20,000 inhabitants in the metropolitan area of Suva, the capital of Fiji. One of four pilot cities of the Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI) in the Pacific, the local government has embarked on a vulnerability assessment and started to address climate change.

The initiative began with the identification of the most vulnerable areas validated by the communities. The local council has put climate change high on the agenda, organized public meetings, school campaigns and festivals. Lami is also championing climate change in dialogue with national authorities such as the Ministry of Local Government, Urban Development, Housing & Environment, the Disaster Management Committee as well as with other local authorities.

Fiji experiences tropical cyclones and Lami is particularly vulnerable to flooding from the river systems traversing it and from storm surges. Coastal and river bank erosion are ongoing and landslides are frequent.

The town council has increased its efforts in coastal protection and is actively engaging the community in disaster preparedness action plans as a result. The partial destruction of the mangroves and the vulnerability of the remaining mangrove forests was of particular concern. In particular to assess the value of the mangroves for flood protection, UN-HABITAT and UNEP joined forces. Building on the vulnerability assessment, a cost-benefit analysis of an ecosystems based approach to climate change adaptation is currently under preparation. Depending on the results – but given early assessments it is likely that eco-systems rehabilitation will take place – the two agencies will support Lami in implementing corresponding adaptation measures.

Port Vila, the capital of Vanuatu and Apia, the capital of Samoa are following the process in Lami closely. Towards the end of 2011 a regional workshop is planned to share the experiences and, if found successful, UN-HABITAT and UNEP are committed to support replication.



Lami, Fiji ©UN-Habitat

## St Louis Hires Climate Change Assistant

The city of Saint Louis in Senegal is working with CCCI to support climate change planning. Very vulnerable to sea level rise and changes in rainfall regimes, the city is confronted with both development and environmental problems and is determined to address them through its Vision 2030. In February 2011 the city hired a Climate Change Assistant, Mr Cheikh Tidiane Wade, who will be in charge of following the implementation of the climate change related activities. Mr. Wade will work closely with the Agence de Developpement Communal in Saint Louis on vulnerability mapping, development of sensitisation materials and community risk assessment processes, and in reviewing local planning documents, including Vision 2030, to climate proof them.

As UN-HABITAT is starting the implementation of construction of housing for the relocation of residents at risk, with support from the Government of Japan, additional opportunities exist to experiment with climate sensitive housing and settlement designs and to develop innovative building approaches.

More information on the work ongoing in Saint Louis is available at [www.unhabitat.org/ccci](http://www.unhabitat.org/ccci).

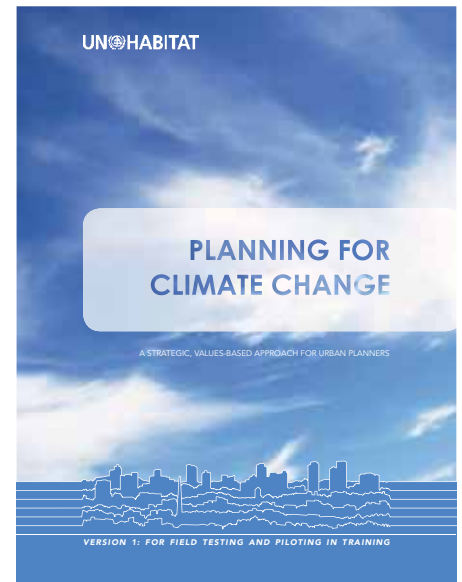


St Louis, Senegal ©UN-Habitat/Marie Dariel-Scognamiglio

### Launch of Tool for Urban Planners

Planning for Climate Change – A strategic, values-based guide for urban planners has been launched. Termed Version 1 is currently being piloted in training and will be field tested in selected CCCI cities. The tool is intended to support planners everywhere, but is intended to be of particular benefit to planners working in low and middle income countries who want to address climate change. The guide's value-based strategic planning process is organized around a four-step approach that incorporates innovative structured decision-making tools with a participatory, community-based methodology.

For more information visit <http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/PFCC-14-03-11.pdf>



### EVENTS

#### Launch of Network for Cities and Climate Change Academy (CCCA) June 2011

The Cities and Climate Change Academy is the university arm of the Cities and Climate Change Initiative, aiming to develop course modules on climate change for urban

planners. Following the Asia-Pacific regional workshop (in 2010) and the African workshop (May 2011) the Global Workshop is planned to precede the ICLEI Resilient Cities Congress. The meeting is jointly organized with the International Institute for Environment and Development, the United Nations University and Technical University Munich

and will take the regional experiences forward. Generic, adaptable course modules are to be conceptualized during the workshop and developed thereafter. These modules can be packaged into an urban climate change course or can be used in support of existing courses. For more information contact [hpui@unhabitat.org](mailto:hpui@unhabitat.org).

### 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 support 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 electronically published periodically. For more information contact [uepb@unhabitat.org](mailto:uepb@unhabitat.org) or visit [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org).

